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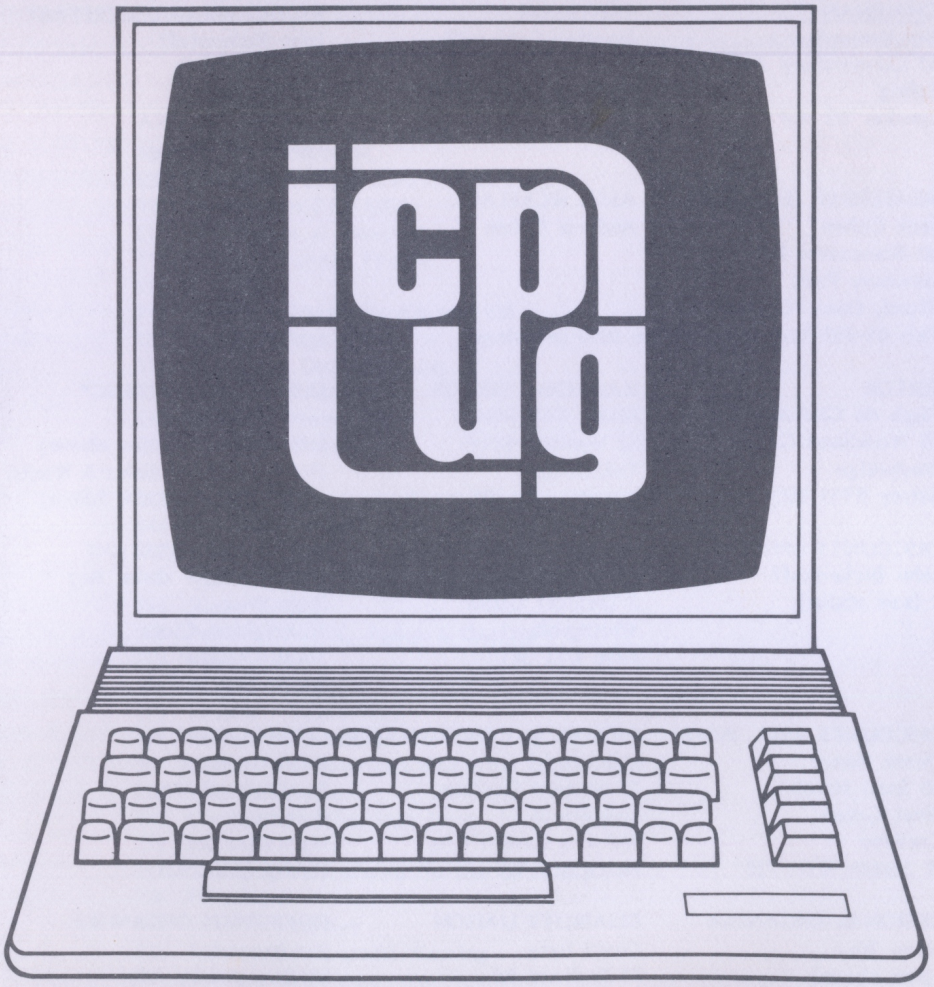
# INDEPENDENT COMMODORE PRODUCTS USER GROUP




Europe's first independent magazine for CBM users

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INDEPENDENT COMMODORE PRODUCTS USERS GROUP
# newsletter

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# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Two things have come as a pleasant surprise to us this month as we worried about the future of the manufacturer whose products we support. Firstly that Commodore is actually making money in spite of the peculiar things it, and some of its subsidiaries, do and say; and secondly the new range of Amigas. We comment as observers, neither of us posessing an Amiga and only half of us having so far even really lusted for one.

For the last year it has been difficult to see where Commodore was going to go, with this remarkable first Amiga attractive only to computer buffs and some few graphic and design professionals, and never looking as though it was about to rescue flagging fortunes. Now at least they seem to have done something right again, with two remarkable new machines that may well capture public imagination and a sizeable market share, the A500 and A2000. Read a lot about them on the pages that follow and, if you want more details, buy the March 'Byte', which has a long 'preview' of the A2000.

The new machines are exciting enough from the Amiga aspect, but we suspect that a lot will depend on how dependably the IBM-PC half of the A2000 works. It is not a question of the Amiga with its 68000 emulating an IBM, any more than it was with the external Sidecar and the A1000: the A2000 has its Sidecar inside on an A2088 card (only a PC-card at present, but an AT-card is promised - did we hear someone snigger?) and such minor problems as arise involve, we gather, the integration of the PC and Amiga outputs and their delivery to the screen and the exterior.

One may shed a tear for A1000 owners whose upgrade path seems now cut off before it had really begun - 'the Amiga is dead, long live the Amiga'. Their machines now suffer the fate - though not with quite such record speed - of the Apricot Xen last year, which was superseded by an incompatible upgrade within months of being marketed. In the fight for progress and survival some must go to the wall.

As to CBM's new Amstrad-bashing under-£500 PC, and their AT clone, the PC 40, we have no information beyond that they exist. In due course the market will deliver a verdict.

May we finish by hoping that we shall see as many as possible of you at the AGM on the 16th May at the Westminster Hall at 2.30, and reminding you that, if we are to catch up our schedule, contributions for the next issue are needed by the end of April?

HdeG
HGV



# THE NEW AMIGAS . . . A FIRST LOOK

by John Broad

## THE AMIGA A500

On 4th March I was lucky enough to be at the Press showing of the much awaited, much talked about new Amigas, the A500 and A2000. These are the latest machines to be launched by Commodore and make up the trio of new computers spawned by CBM this month. All good things come in threes and the third, of course, was the PC 40 (AT clone) that appeared at the recent WHICH show at the NEC - where, by the way, I first got a glimpse of the A2000 hidden away in Commodore's rather super new show stand. I shall not attempt a full review as I have only had a brief introduction to the machines.

The A500 is the much awaited ST-basher, CBM's answer to the ST, to which it bears more than a slight resemblance. For those who do not know what an ST is like, the A500 can be likened to the stand-alone version of the 128 as opposed to the 128D.

On the right side towards the rear is the internal 3.5" disk drive, with easy-access eject button; the drive-operation-signal light is situated and labelled just above the numeric key cluster. On the rear of the A500 are the numerous in/out ports. From right to left first the mouse port then joy port 2; further along are the PC-compatible serial and parallel ports, second drive and, of course, audio outputs; finally the monitor socket and power input socket from the external PSU.

Recessed neatly on the left side underneath the machine, protected by a cover, is the system expansion bus. This is where the memory expansion slot can be found,

The keyboard is quie a revelation and long overdue. It now boasts some 96 keys in three distinctive clusters and colours; that on the A2000 is the same except, obviously, that it is detached. Any user of an AT or clone will recognize the layout at once. Along the top are the two banks of function keys, 10 in all, and below these is the main QWERTY layout cluster with an extra large return key as found on up-market AT keyboards. To the right of the main keys is a small cluster of four cursor keys mounted in a cross formation. Further right is an 18-key numeric cluster including, of course, the additional return key plus all the mathematical operand keys, the whole making up a very business-like and professional layout.

The A500 comes with a standard 512K RAM which is upgradable to 1Mb internally. A modulator and half Mb RAM board with built-in battery-

backed clock/calendar is an optional extra. Built into the ROM is the long-awaited 1.2 Kickstart (European version) which I am sure will be a delight to many.

Finally - what you've all been waiting for - the price: CBM intend to launch it at £499 plus VAT for the A500 itself without monitor. This leaves you free to obtain the 1081 monitor as a separate item or I have seen the A500 and 1901, which I use with my 128, quoted together.

The A500 will get its first general public showing in this country at the CBM show on June 12-14.

THE AMIGA A2000

Launched at the same time as its little brother the A500, and both shown at the huge Hanover fair was the Amiga A2000 OSA (Open System Architecture) computer - OSA is the latest buzz-word from the marketing department. This machine is aimed at those who want everything in the shape of all the facilities of the Amiga with all the benefits from the vast array of PC add-ons. This beauty you buy as the basic model and purchase what add-ons you want to tailor it to your requirements - this is what they mean by OSA.

In shape it is very like the current A1000, but the box housing the CPU and expansion cards is twice as high. The detachable keyboard has the full 94-key configuration found on AT clones, plus the two special Amiga keys. In layout it is identical with that on the A500.

With the basic system you get the large CPU box, detachable keyboard, one 3.5" internal drive, 1 Mb of usable RAM, and Kickstart 1.2 in ROM. The monitor is now part of the OSA, leaving the choice to the individual. All ports are there, including the much needed standard centronics parallel.

To give one the flavour of OSA I shall describe the one shown and configured to work concurrently with MSDOS from the Amiga environment. On the screen at the time of the demo was 'Microsoft's Windows' driven under MSDOS 3.2. This was loaded from the 5.25" drive installed internally and situated just below the 3.5" drive. Also on board at this time was a 20Mb hard drive and in one of the slots was the XT bridge board card (8088). The standard Amiga Monitor (1081) was used for the display.

Anyway back to the demo: there we were looking at Microsoft windows in the top half of the display and DPaint II in the bottom half, the Amiga treating the Microsoft package as one of its tasks. With remarkable dexterity the operator was drawing simultaneously with the mouse driving 'Windows' and the Amiga mouse in DPaint, though he



declined my suggestion that he open a further window and take off with Flight Sim II as well as completing his drawings. I suppose the fact that one only has two hands is a limitation of this new machine, although both mouse icons did do a sort of tango to confirm true multitasking.

Inside the box there is provision for up to eight expansion cards in various combinations. The first two slots are best described as multifunctional for combined Amiga/PC and AT compatibility, although at the time of writing no AT card was available. Next comes a single 86-pin slot for CPU expansion namely the 68020/68881 which I'm told is already being used by some US owners. The remaining five slots are all 100-pin and can be used for any of the hundreds of cards already available and in use on many PC clones. As far as I can find out, the majority of these slots contain the new Amiga autoconfigure feature.

I hope this gives the flavour of the OSA feature by now, as the price for the basic system as described above is £1095 plus VAT with the 8088 bridge card a further £299. Commodore say the model will be here in quantity in the second quarter of the year and on show to the general public at the June show.

Impression . . . I don't know whether I can be totally objective about these machines as a loyal commodore supporter, but to be absolutely honest I feel they are real winners, which I'm glad to say I think should put Commodore back in the picture with a vengeance. (Atari owners may eat their hearts out.)

Would I have one? - I could well be on the quayside waiting for the first shipment to arrive, but no doubt Malcolm from the Cavendish Commodore Centre will beat me to it. A more detailed write-up will follow as soon as I can get hold of one.

POSTSCRIPT

Hot news from the Hanover show, for which I am indebted to Trev, Kev and Tony of the UK-AUG. Since dashing this off to catch the newsletter, these lads have lent me a huge amount of info from their recent trip to the German show. I don't speak the lingo, but I am slowly getting it translated.

An MPS 2000 full-colour printer was shown running from the Amiga; and a Commodore PC1 low-cost PC compatible with 512k RAM costing less than £500.

--oOo--

## NEWS FROM CBM USA

ICPUG has finally been added to the mailing list of Commodore's own newsletter, 'Inside West Chester' (IWC). Our first issue is #5, published earlier this year and containing some interesting snippets.

The first piece of useful advice is a suggestion to buy the March issue of BYTE magazine. If you are interested in the new Amiga A2000 machine, then this copy of BYTE is a must, with a very extensive preview of the machine and the A2088 card that gives it IBM compatibility.

The next item is one very close to our Chairman's heart (in fact see Jim's Jottings for latest information) and concems the 1571 Disk ROM. According to IWC a new ROM was almost ready for release when a further bug was found. Not wanting to 'knowingly release an inferior product' (!) CBM have delayed release of the new ROM. Again according to IWC it will be a 'field upgrade' available at 'modest charge'.

The 1581, 3.5" disk drive is all but ready to be released. It is not, apparently, a 1571 with a smaller drive installed, but a totally new design. The drive is designed for the C64/C128 and is described by IWC as a 'large capacity floppy disk that will be faster than the 1571 in BURST mode . . . The formatted capacity of the 1581 will be approximately double that of the 1571.' No details of pricing are given. A further note states that the 1581 will not be read- or write-compatible with Amiga disks.

An interesting item shows Europe is not always behind the USA in computers: the C128D is only to be launched in America this summer (did I hear some cynic say 'that's because it's only then that the new ROMs will be fitted so that it works properly'?).

What I found to be an amazing admission was that IWC was put together using Ventura Desktop Publishing on an IBM compatible (presumably a PC-10?). So much for the usefulness of the Amiga. Talking of the Amiga, IWC explains two schemes run by CBM to support commercial developers of Amiga software. If you are in this category, then further information is available from CBM West Chester.

Finally, in case all the reports of Commodore's apparently poor performance have been upsetting you, cheer up! In their second fiscal quarter CBM made 21 million dollars profit (no, that's not a printing error).

HGV

--oOo--



## THE AMIGA AT HANOVER

compiled from Micronet by Brian Grainger

At the time of writing, March 14th, the following is the very latest news on the new Amiga machines. I make no excuses for the fact that some of the detail may get overtaken by events up to printing of the newsletter - one of the problems of a long lead time. I also make no excuses for darting from one topic to another and back. This report is taken, with permission, exclusively from Micronet. This is the simplest way I could compile it as well as giving a flavour of how the news unfolds as things develop. For those of you who have not tried Prestel or Micronet this news item will give a flavour of what we Micronetters have come to expect as run of the mill. News as it happens.

The Commodore Amiga 2000 24:02:87

When we first heard about the A2000 Amiga back in January we knew it would be a computer that, for under $1,500 (£1,000), would include 1Mb of RAM and and an 880K 3-inch floppy drive. The current incamation of the Amiga, the A1000 model, is pretty much the same as when the US industry first saw it back in September 1985 - a 68000 microprocessor for $1,500 that was capable of multitasking and superb graphics. Trouble was (and still is) that whilst the A1000 has a side connector for bolting on extra goodies such as the much-vaunted Amiga Sidecar unit, it remains very much a closed box.

Now comes the A2000 machine. Coupled with the optional A2088 PC expansion card, the A2000 offers expandability never before seen on a 68000 machine. For a US retail price of $1,500 (no UK prices available just yet) you get a machine with seven PC-style expansion slots and the ability to access a wide range of storage devices. Existing A1000 owners will find the A2000's main metal casing to be the same width as the A1000, but deeper and taller than its forebear. The same basic components are all here:

68000 microprocessor running at 7.14Mhz
3 custom chips to handle video
In/Out and DMA (Direct memory Access) ports.

There the similarity ends. As with the IBM PC, the casing has knock-out panels into which can be fitted a 3-1/2 or 5-1/4-inch or hard disk drives. The mouse and keyboard ports have been moved from the right-hand side and rear of the casing down to the lower front panel, whilst the keyboard connector is now of a PC standard type.

On the software side, the need for a Kickstart disc to load the operating system has been removed, thanks to the transfer of these RAM-gobbling routines to ROM. This evolution mirrors the early development of the Atari 520ST whose software (TOS) was also originally on disk.

Connections with external devices are now considerably improved. Both the parallel and serial ports now conform to industry standards, removing the problem of peripheral-blowing voltages as seen on the A1000 ports.

The A2000 has five more keys than the 89 seen on the A1000 keyboard, with Help, +, -, * and / now part of the numeric keypad. In addition to this, the cursor keys have been repositioned into a T shape (as seen on the BBC Master), rather than a cross - a retrograde move?

Internally, the seven expansion slots are configurable to either the Amiga bus system or the PC XT standard. Because of the way in which the bus bars interact, a maximum of five slots can be configured to the Amiga standard, with a PC XT maximum of four slots. As with the A1000, the A2000 has an 86 pin slot for direct access to the 68000's unbuffered signals - this slot has been retained to allow peripheral compatibility for co-processors and the like.

The hardware compatibility of the A2000 to the A1000 does not carry over to the software side of things however. Because the Kickstart version 1.2 operating system now resides in ROM, as opposed to version 1.1 which loaded into write-protected RAM, some programs using copy protection may cause problems when loading. Commodore US say that software houses are working to remove this problem.

UK prices of the A2000 and peripherals won't be revealed until the March 4th launch, but US prices appear to be highly competitive. Potential A1000 owners would do well to wait until the A2000 appears, due to its similar pricing structure:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A2000 | main system, including 1Mb RAM and single 880K 3.5" floppy | $ 1499 |
| Internal 3.5" drive | | 199 |
| Internal 5.25" drive | | 299 |
| A2088 | PC co-processor card | 499 |
| A2050 | 2Mb RAM expansion card | 499 |
| A2060 | Composite video card | 99 |
| A2094 | Hard disc/SCSI controller card | 349 |
| A2002 | Colour monitor | 349 |
| A2080 | . . . . (long persistence) | 499 |



The £500 Amiga 04:03:87

"The Commodore Amiga A500 . . . represents the ultimate computer for the leisure and home productivity markets," says the firm in its press release. The A500, at £499 +VAT, uses the 68000 microprocessor and the three support chips that handle graphics and sound. Standard RAM is 512K, expandable to 1MB internally. Version 1.2 of the Amiga operating system (A1000 users have 1.1) is included in the machine on ROM.

In appearance the A500 looks a bit like a C128, (or ST for that matter), with keyboard (all the keys of the A1000 and a few more are there), CPU and 3-1/2" disc drive in the same box. The drive resides on the right hand side in the same position as the ST FM or Tandy 1000. Like the A1000, the 500's drive can store 880K of data. Two additional floppies can be added to the computer. Commodore say all programs written on or for the original Amiga will run on the new machines (and one was running Amiga Starglider which is, according to author Jez San, the ultimate test).

Software written on the A500 (or A2000) should run on the A1000 providing it has the new 1.2 operating system. This will be available very soon from dealers for a nominal cost of £15-£20. The A500 will make its UK public debut at the Commodore Show in June, where a whole floor will be devoted to the Amiga. The machine should also be on sale by the end of June.

The 1081 monitor (as supplied with the A1000) is an extra £349, though Commodore will knock off £50 if you buy it at the same time as the A500. A slightly lower resolution monitor (1908) is also available, for £299. But, as several people pointed out at the launch, a cheaper monitor can be connected to the machine.

A TV modulator will be available, say Commodore, but there are no details about when or how much. Said Chris Kaday, MD of Commodore UK, "Commodore have developed another product which will dictate the shape of a market. The Amiga A500 really does represent the ultimate low cost computer. Fantastic games, superb music and video capabilities are all available to the highest possible standard. That . . . combined with multi-tasking . . . is enough to ensure that the Amiga A500 is a success."

The Amiga 2000 (Hanover) 04:03:87

Although officially there are no plans to drop the A1000 Amiga, the machine is likely to disappear as soon as the A2000 becomes available. According to Commodore, that means before the end of April. Because with prices starting at £1095 + VAT it's hard to see anyone buying the

A1000 when for an extra £150 they can buy the newer machine. The A2000 again retains compatibility with other Amigas, but offers nine expansion slots and one video slot, a variety of disk combinations, right up to 40 megabytes and tape streamers.

The 2000 is closer to the A1000 in appearance, with the cpu/disk drive unit separate from the 94 key keyboard. At the launch, Commodore was making much of the machine's PC compatibility, demonstrating the 2000 running MSDOS applications alongside Amiga ones. But whereas the A1000 required an external add-on (Sidecar, £700) to access PC software, the new machine can accept an internal PC card which (only) costs £299 and should be available at the same time as the machine (April).

With a single 3-1/2" drive, 1Mb of RAM, keyboard and mouse the A2000 costs £1095 (+ VAT). The A2000M system, which includes 1081 monitor, is £1395. Prices for hard disk-based systems, external RAM (the machine can address 8Mb), etc. will be announced shortly.

One of the key attractions of the A2000 is its expandability. The ten slots, one video, five Amiga system bus and four PC slots, make the machine "open" and Commodore is already encouraging third-party firms to produce boards for the A2000.

U.K. price List

| Model | RAM | Disk | Price |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | £ |
| A500 | 512K | 1 x 880K 3.5" | 574 inc.VAT |
| A500M (inc. 1081 monitor) | | | 918 inc.VAT |
| 512K + real time clock | | | ? |
| RGB to TV modulator lead | | | ? |
| Extra 880K drive | | | 199 + VAT |
| A2000 | 1Mb | 1 x 880K 3.5" | 1095 + VAT |
| A2000M (inc. 1081 monitor) | | | 1395 + VAT |

(A2000 prices include a year's on-site maintenance)

| | |
|---|---|
| PC bridge 8088CPU plus 256K | 299 + VAT |
| 1081 Hi-res monitor | 349 + VAT |
| 1901 Med-res monitor | 299 + VAT |

For comparison:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A1000 | 512K | 1x880K 3-1/2" | 1094 +VAT |

(Includes 1081 monitor)



The Amiga 500/2000 (Hanover) 06-03-87

At Hanover there were no less than thirty A500 Amigas, as shown at the London launch. As expected, pricing of the A500 is comparable to the UK's at 1,298DM.

Despite Chris Kaday's reticence to announce prices for expansion of the A500 (and A2000) at the UK press launch Commodore West Germany are showing potential customers the US recommended price list. For the A500, for example, the cost of expanding RAM from 512K to 1Mb is just $149 - a shade under £100 at current exchange rates. Also of interest to Amiga Techies is the fact that A500 contains 0.75Mb of RAM, 0.25Mb of which is taken up by the operating system, paged in from ROM as necessary.

On the A2000 front, Commodore West Germany is showing the new desktop Amiga in all its glory with (we are told) a very early prototype of the 68020 co-processor card on view. Co-processing was one of the things mentioned at the London launch of the A2000. We hear, however, that the 68020 or even 68030 microprocessors are destined to appear in the A3000 Amiga scheduled very provisionally for later this year. Sources indicate that the A3000 exists in hand-built prototype form already, and is capable of running Unix and several multi-user environments. Having said this, the expandability of the A2000 may mean that the A3000 is nothing more than an expanded A2000. Another source (overheard at the bar department) tells us that the A500 may yet be seen as a terminal, running off an Amiga A3000 - an interesting possibility.

The Amiga 500/2000 (Hanover) 07-03-87

We now have the full US price lists for the Amiga 500/2000 peripherals. Unlike the UK offices, CBM US are now detailing the prices of Amiga peripherals which, when converted into sterling, look fairly good value. Whether CBM UK apply such currency conversions or not remains to be seen. Heading off the list is the internal 3-1/2 inch disc drive for the A2000 at $199 (£125). The 5-1/4 inch drive, which will, we suspect, become a pre-requisite to IBM/MSDOS usage of the A2088 PC card, weighs in at $299 (£190). Memory expansion on the A2000 is via the A2050 2Mb RAM card (yet to be announced in the UK) which will sell for $499 (£315) in the States. Interestingly, a composite video option is available for the A2000 via the A2060 composite video interface card at $99 (£63) which will enable new Amiga A2000 owners to use their existing composite monitors with the A2000.

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## LITTLE COMPUTER PEOPLE

by Robin Harvey

Did you know that there is a little person residing in your computer?. If you have any doubts, procure the Activision Little Computer People Research Group program and run it. You will be introduced to the home of your resident Little Computer Person (LCP) and watch him going about his daily chores. He is an independent little devil with a mind of his own but, with a certain amount of love, he will respond to some of your requests. He is also rather finicky, as you will find out if you ignore his pleas for food, water and attention. If you have a cruel streak in you and just leave him, he will turn green and, looking decidedly ill, go to bed. My attempts to see if this condition became terminal were thwarted by the three females in my home setting upon me for being so cruel that I was forced (for my own future comfort) to feed him.

The discovery that LCP reside in computers was first highlighted in 1980 by a computer programmer who consistently found that perfect code entered into his computer produced mumbo-jumbo. Another programmer in 1984 found that his attempts to have his computer play music were frustrated by someone in the computer making certain notes play out of tune, but it was not until 1985 that Activision programmers found a way of finding the LCP and his living accommodation. The result was the Little Computer People program which exposes him and his home.

The home consists of two floors plus a loft conversion and all the usual artefacts that you would expect to find. The recreation room has a working TV, stereo and a piano that the LCP plays rather well. It also has a typewriter which the LCP can use to write you letters, and a filing cabinet. There is also a mystery door through which the LCP goes sometimes but there is no clue what he does behind it. The first floor has a fully operational bedroom, bathroom and study, the latter having its own home computer and a working clock. The ground floor contains a kitchen with fridge, cooker, sink and water container as well as the LCP lounge with fireplace, fireside chair, telephone and front door.

It would be foolish to try and tell you more about my LCP because yours is quite likely to behave differently! So go ahead and get this program, it is certainly different from the 'run of the mill', 'blast the baddies off the screen' type of program, and adds a whole new dimension to personalising your computer.

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## COVER COMPETITION - RESULTS

As even the most myopic of our readers must have noticed, the newsletter has boasted a new cover since the Jan/Feb issue. The design is based very closely on a last-minute entry submitted by Roy Powers of Basingstoke, who thus takes first price.

The enthusiasm and ingenuity shown by all the entrants impressed the judges greatly - so much so that we managed to persuade the Committee to agree to give every entrant one of the new ICPUG ties as a token of the hard work and high standards achieved.

It was difficult enough to choose a winner, and runner-up was no easier, but after much deliberation Trevor Hatchett of Stockport was adjudged runner-up for a most impressive portfolio of ideas.

Prizes will be sent out as soon as possible. The following is a list of all those who sent in entries, in alphabetical order:

| | |
|---|---|
| Brian Clifford | Basingstoke, Hants |
| Kjell Dahlberg | Majorca, Spain |
| Steve Dutton | Coventry, W Midlands |
| P Fletcher | Brighton, Sussex |
| Steve Hall | Ilford, Essex |
| Trevor Hatchett | Stockport, Cheshire |
| J Matthew Horton | Huddersfield, W Yorks |
| AG Hoskins | Treharris, Wales |
| John Picking | Upminster, Essex |
| Ray Powers | Basingstoke, Hants |
| Keith Thomas | Cardiff, Wales |
| Ken Turner | Barrow in Furness, Cumbria |

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## AGM

We announced in the last Newsletter that the Annual General Meeting would take place on 16 May. The time and place are now also available. It will take place in the Central Hall, Westminster (right opposite the Abbey) at 2.30pm.

No contentious or remarkable new business has been put down for discussion, but this is your annual chance to meet the outgoing, and elect the incoming Committee, and get anything heavy off your chest.

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# REVIEW—VIZAWRITE CLASSIC 128

by Nick Higham

Vizawrite Classic runs on the C128 and C128D in 80-column FAST mode. The package consists of a disk, a cartridge and a manual. The cartridge provides the copy protection, and in addition contains 4K of program code; the main program is booted from the unprotected disk. I applaud this form of 'drive-friendly' protection. The cartridge can be left plugged in permanently, as it doesn't affect the operation of other software (either in 64 or 128 mode).

VC supports both serial drives (1541/1570/1571) and IEEE drives (with a suitable interface. It runs perfectly from my 4040 connected with Microport's SIPOD via a PET 4032, provided I switch to FAST mode before booting. The colossal 297 blocks of program code loads in 65 seconds on my 1570.

VC's screen presentation is quite Mac-like. The 20x76 character text window is surrounded by a border, the third line of which displays the document name, the page number and the cursor position. The top screen line houses the menu bar, which contains the options VIZA (displayed as a triangle), FILE, EDIT, SEARCH, GOTO, PRINT, DISK, LINK. An option is selected by pressing the command key (either ESC or CBM) and then highlighting the desired option using the cursor keys or the space bar. A quicker method of selection, once you're familiar with the options, is to press the command key followed by the first letter of the option name. A pull-down menu presents the sub-options which, again, can be selected using the cursor keys or the appropriate letter key. An example of the thought that has gone into the design of VC is that on pressing the command key, the previously selected option is automatically highlighted, ready for selection with RETURN (similarly for the sub-option); this proves to be a great time saver. The menu options are summarised at the end of this article.

In the rest of the article I'll concentrate on what I regard as the most interesting and unusual features of VC, skipping over the basic features common to all good word-processing programs.

## Text format

The strongest feature of VC is its what-you-see-is-what-you-get display. Text appears on screen almost exactly as it will print out. The exceptions are mainly related to format symbols, which control tabs, indents, underlining, emboldening etc. These are entered by



pressing CTRL followed by a letter (e.g. 'u' for underline) and are displayed as character-sized icons (e.g. a downward pointing arrow for subscript). Margins, together with tab and column settings are set in format lines (sometimes called rulers), any number of which may appear in the text. Any given piece of text is formatted according to the definitions in the previous format line. When a format line is changed (for example by increasing the right margin) then all the text below is instantly reformatted! This makes precise adjustment of layout easy, quick and intuitive. Alterations to the text also automatically invoke reformatting. Unusually, spaces are displayed as raised, feint dots. This is a great help in distinguishing between spaces which were typed, and those which are a result of the formatting. For those who prefer an uncluttered screen, CTRL-H (Hide) removes format lines, most format symbols, and the dotted spaces. New users might be surprised to find that the DEL key deletes the character under the cursor; for word processing I much prefer this to the standard use of the DEL key in the Commodore screen editor.

The text is broken up into pages explicitly as the text is typed: CTRL-P starts a new page. This provides the user with complete control over the paging and facilitates movement about the document. F1/F2 move to the next/previous page, while CBM-G-P-n jumps to page n. If you want to relinquish this freedom over the formatting, then you can pass responsibility to the FILE PAGINATE command, which will do it automatically and intelligently (split or don't split paragraphs over a page etc.). The other function keys are equally useful: F3/F4 moves to the next/previous screen, F5 to the next tab, and F6 to the opposite end of the line. F7 enters insert mode, creating a few blank lines into which one types, rather than pushing existing text along as each new character is typed. F8 enters delete mode. Here the cursor keys are used to highlight a block of text (in reverse field) which is deleted on pressing RETURN. An invaluable feature is 'search and highlight' in which, instead of using the cursor keys, you press any key and text is highlighted up to the first occurrence of that character (e.g. space to highlight a word, CTRL-RETURN to highlight up to the end of paragraph). The same techniques are used to move and copy blocks of text.

Since VC was designed specifically for the C128, full use is made of the machine's capabilities. Clever use of 80-column mode user-defined characters gives the screen an attractive appearance (in fact, my first reaction was that the screen is bit-mapped, but it's not!). One American reviewer commented 'the only thing that reminds me I am not using an Amiga is the lack of a mouse'! Block or underline cursors may

be selected, with three flash rates. Full control over screen colours is provided, with selection via the function keys from the VIZA ADJUST CONTROLS option. Underlining is shown on screen, and emboldening is shown using high intensity colour. Advantage is taken of the burst mode of the 1570/1571. A 78-block document loads in an incredible seven seconds. Over 55K of text space is available. At any time a high-resolution screen dump may be sent to an Epson compatible or MPS-801 printer, by pressing ALT+LINE FEED.

Headers (and similarly footers) are handled in an unusual way: each has its own page, which is just like any other page. Thus a header can be of any length and may contain any format commands. The only disadvantage I can see with this approach is that it permits only one header per document, although this could be overcome by splitting a document into smaller parts and 'linking' using PRINT GLOBAL. Alternate headers and footers can be created by crafty use of the powerful Mail-Merge, which can take information from disk or from the Work Page. The Work Page is a separate page, unlimited in size and not normally printed, which can be used for notes and 'rough working'. I use it to record the dates of creation and last update of a document, and to indicate the printer profile (see below) and the printer and interface to be used.

Printers

VC offers complete control of a wide range of printers, and on suitable daisywheel or laser printers can perform microspaced justification with either monospaced or proportionally spaced character sets. Serial, parallel and RS232 interfaces are supported (the latter running up to 19200 baud using a low-cost cable from Viza Software) . The built-in (memory resident) protocols include CBM dot matrix/daisy wheel, Epson, Star/Shinwa and Juki/Qume/Diablo. If these are not suitable for your printer then you can create a Printer Profile. This is a VC document of a special form which enables you to redefine any information associated with printer control (e.g. the embolden on/off sequences, or the proportional spacing tables). Once loaded, using VIZA PROFILE LOAD, all printing is done using the definitions in the profile. I defined a profile that produces better looking sub- and superscripts from an Epson FX-80 by doing half-line forward and reverse line-feeds and printing the -script in 12-pitch (elite). I also created a VC document that downloads user-defined Greek and maths characters to the FX-80. Using these tools I've coaxed VC into producing some very acceptable looking mathematical papers.



Selection of print parameters such as line feeds, form feeds, single sheet, paper length, pitch etc. is done from the PRINT SETUP PAGE window. You simply move the cursor around the window selecting or deselecting the various options by tapping the space bar. Included amongst these are three NLQ fonts, which work with MPS-801 or Epson compatible printers. These proportionally spaced fonts are quite different from standard dot matrix fonts, and seem to be based on the New York, Geneva and Chicago fonts used on the Apple Mac! Actually, NLQ is a slight misnomer since the fonts, although printed in bit-image mode, are still quite dotty - I suspect this is a consequence of their having to work on the MPS-801.

File storage

While Vizawrite 64 stores documents as PRG files, VC uses the SEQ file type. This doesn't make it any easier to read files using another wordprocessor because the files are in screen ASCII (where 'a' is represented by 1). However, it is possible to direct VC output to a disk file in standard CBM ASCII. This facility could be used to send VC files over a modem. Users upgrading from Vizawrite 64 will be pleased to know that VC can read its predecessor's files - they may be loaded using the standard FILE OPEN. In fact, it appears that virtually any foreign wordprocessor file can be read using FILE MERGE (the manual mentions Superscript, Easyscript and Wordpro in particular). Unusually, a VC file is preceded by 200 or so characters of system information, such as document name, screen colours, cursor type, and all the printer and page parameters. When a file is loaded all these settings are reinstated, and the cursor reappears in precisely the position it was in when the file was saved.

Spelling checker

VC contains an integrated, memory-resident spelling checker, Vizaspell, which utilises a 30,000 word dictionary supplied on the reverse side of the program disk. CBM-L for LINK switches to the Vizaspell screen and menu bar. LIST creates a word list, giving the option of displaying the words in alphabetical order or in order of decreasing frequency of usage. CHECK creates a word list (if not already done via LIST) and prompts for the Vizaspell dictionary disk to be inserted. It then searches the dictionary for each word in the word list. During this process the screen displays the alphabetical word list in columns, a reverse field bar denoting the word being checked. Any unrecognised words are left highlighted. The spell check usually takes under 3

minutes in total on my 1570 (whatever the document size). During this process VC can be left unattended, giving you the chance for a break. On completion of the check you have the option of looking through a list of unrecognised words. CBM-Q (QUIT) returns to the main program whereupon the SEARCH VERIFY command searches from the cursor position for the first unrecognised word. One has the options of SKIP (ignore it but ask again if the word occurs later), ACCEPT (accept the word and don't query if it occurs again later), LEARN (mark for later inclusion in the User Dictionary) and EDIT. The last command places the user back in the usual edit mode with the cursor on the first character of the unrecognised word. The document may now be edited in any way (even using menu commands) and then the search process continued. At the end of the process any LEARNt words may be added to the User dictionary, which extends the main dictionary. The User dictionary is simply a VC document with words separated by tab characters, and so may freely be edited and printed out. It can be merged with the main dictionary; any word in both the user and the main dictionary is deleted from the main dictionary. What I find particularly attractive about Vizaspell is that it gives the user three chances to spot mistakes: during the disk check itself by watching the screen display, by LIST UNRECOGNISED and by SEARCH VERIFY. Rather than be queried on unrecognised, but valid words not in the dictionary (such as abbreviations, postcodes and equations) I often use FIND to correct the few genuine mistakes, which I recognise from the first two stages above. (I'm wary about putting too many short 'words' in my user dictionary because the more there are, the smaller the chance that a genuine typing mistake will be picked up.)

Glossaries

A glossary is a VC document containing phrases preceded by one to ten character identity names. Once a glossary is loaded, the EDIT GLOSSARY command prompts for an identity name and inserts that item at the cursor position. Items with a one-character identity can be entered even more quickly by holding down ALT with the appropriate key. The glossary can't be used to drive the menus (i.e. there are no genuine macros). The glossary area is dynamic, sharing the available memory space with the document.

Columns

Newspaper style columns are easily created in VC by using special symbols on a format line to mark the start and end of each column. In the text, these same column format symbols are used to force the text



to flow into a new column. Columns have various uses: I use them to print tickets two across the page and to list my User dictionary in three columns. Four-across labels can be produced this way too.

VC for desktop publishing

Although it makes no claims to do so, VC brings desktop publishing (DTP) to the C128, albeit in a limited form: it enables the production of multi-font, proportionally spaced, multi-column, text only documents. In combination with a laser printer it makes an excellent system for producing professional quality text-based reports, manuals, newsletters, price lists etc. (witness the VC manual). In comparison with fully fledged DTP systems the main features lacking are bit-image graphics inclusion, and a more intrinsic support for a wide range of fonts (for example, naturally enough for a wordprocessor, VC assumes that all fonts are of the same height). However, in making such a comparison, it's only fair to point out that many DTP packages offer little in the way of wordprocessing features. For instance I have experience with the £150 MSDOS version of Fleet Street Editor. Its manual sensibly recommends that text be prepared in a wordprocessor and then imported to the program. Using FSE on a PC-AT compatible machine I found editing and formatting to be slower than with VC, and the program generally quite fiddly to use. On the subject of MSDOS machines, I've yet to find an MSDOS wordprocessor that is as pleasant and easy to use as VC (potential Amstrad PC 1512 purchasers take note!), my favourite so far being PC-Outline (ostensibly a "thought processor" rather than a wordprocessor). I find PC-Write to be a superb text editor (it has many useful editing features not found in VC or Superscript 128), but I find it difficult to use for formatting text.

Posssible improvements

Could VC be improved? I find the calculator (displayed with nice graphics) more fiddly to use than my pocket calculator. I'd like to be able to move the cursor in units of a word, sentence and paragraph and delete a word with one keypress. A "change case" command would be useful. Macros would enhance the power considerably. It would be nice if the facility to scroll through an alphabetised directory could be used to select a file for all disk operations, not just FILE OPEN. I'd like to be able to send Vizaspell output to the printer, and to a disk file (screen dumps are too slow for frequent use). The manual, beautifully produced using VC and a Hewlett Packard laser printer, may be rather confusing for the beginner, and it leaves quite a lot unsaid.

As is clear from the above, I'm very enthusiastic about VC. It runs very fast. It's fun to use and friendly. Complicated formatting (of tables, for example) can be done with consummate ease. The user interface is logical and intuitive. Almost total control is provided over the printer. And the overall range of features is a match for any 8-bit micro wordprocessor specification I've seen.

Comparison with SS

Finally, the question I suspect many readers will ask: How does VC compare with Superscript 128? I prefer VC in almost every respect. It's only fair to stress, however, that opinions of a word processor are strongly influenced by personal taste. I'd certainly recommend any serious 128 user to give VC a try.

Vizawrite menu commands

VIZA: Information, Status, Calculator, Profile Load, Glossary Load, Adjust Controls.
FILE: New, Open, Close, Replace, Save, List, Merge, Paginate
EDIT: Copy, Move, Delete, Insert, Glossary, Total Figures.
SEARCH: Find, Replace, Verify.
GOTO: Page, Header, Footer, Work.
PRINT: Route, Printer, Setup Page, Document, Mail Merge, Global.
DISK: Prepare, Command, Route, Erase File, Backup.
LINK (to Vizaspell).

Vizaspell menu commands:

LIST: Alphabetic, High Usage, Unrecognised.
CHECK (document).
ADD (Words to User Dictionary).
SEARCH (dictionary).
UTILITIES: Integrate User Dictionary, Copy Dictionary Files, Make Empty dictionary
QUIT (to Vizawrite).

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# JIM'S JOTTINGS

by Jim Kennedy

NEW NEWSLETTER FORMAT

As you know from the last newsletter, we are going over to using a laser printer to produce the camera-ready copy for this publication in the next issue or so. Hewlett-Packard are furnishing us with one of their Laserjet printers for this purpose and Viza Software Ltd will provide us with their VizaWrite Classic 128 as the word processor. We wish to thank both these firms for their generous support.

The reason for using these two items is simply that VizaWrite Classic 128 supports the Hewlett-Packard Laserjet protocols directly. One can call up a particular font style such as Times Roman or Helvetica directly from VizaWrite. A simple, single figure, reverse field marker is inserted into the text where one wishes to change the type font. When it is printed on the laser printer all text following that marker is then in the new font. It doesn't make any difference if you change fonts again on the same line, the text as printed may still be set as justified (both margins being flush). A simple cable between the C128 and the Hewlett-Packard Laserjet, which is available from either Viza Software Ltd or Mick Bignell of Microport for less than £20, connects the 128 to the printer.

If any members wish to start their own desk-top publishing, bear in mind that just having a laser printer which emulates say an Epson printer may give you only a dot-matrix-style output - albeit at the resolution of 300 dots per inch (dpi) of which most laser printers are capable. To get proper font styles at 300 dpi, as opposed to just a more precise dot-matrix output, the word processor or desk-top publishing program must speak the laser printer's language. It must tell the printer not that it wants a dot here and a dot there but that it wants a Times Roman Bold upper case 'A' at such and such a place followed by a lower case 'n'. Likewise a screen dump from a C128 to a laser printer only produces a 640 x 200 dot 'picture' on a laser printer which over a 10-inch-wide area is only 64 dpi. There is more to using laser printers than meets the eye. And making things come out justified after changing fonts requires some thought behind the programming. My article entitled 'Through the Looking Glass' in the Mar/Apr 86 Newsletter may be of some help to those of you thinking about entering the desk-top-publishing field.

We in ICPUG are entering these matters in two stages. Firstly, converting to laser printer but with only a text capability. Secondly,

and when the software becomes available, we shall expand and add graphics capability. This will probably entail using an Amiga with our Hewlett-Packard Laserjet printer but with some more RAM. That was another reason for selecting the Hewlett-Packard printer, it comes also as a Laserjet Plus with an extra 1/2 megabyte of RAM and just recently the Laserjet II has been announced which will have options of 1, 2 or 4 megabytes of RAM. We see our printer upgrade path from the Laserjet printer through the Laserjet Plus and on to the Laserjet II along with our computer path from a C128 to an Amiga in about a year. Since VizaWrite is due out on the Amiga, it will most probably remain our word-processing or desk-top-publishing system.

The credit for starting us down this path must go to Hugh de Glanville in his editorial in the Nov/Dec 86 Newsletter. Following his lead and making enquiries led us to discover that Commodore 128 owners have had a desk-top-publishing system sitting in their laps for many moons. Granted it is a text-only system at present, unless one wants to include dot-matrix-style graphics, but then most of what we print is textual matter anyway. However, if one delivers the output from the laser printer to a printer as camera-ready copy, leaving space on the pages for separate graphics artwork, one can publish a very nice book or magazine, thank you. More on this as we adopt the new technology.

FEEDBACK

I have had a lot of response to my last Jottings column in the Jan/Feb Newsletter. Nick Higham wrote endorsing Brain Boxes and their interfaces. Nick got their C128/64 RS232 cable to connect his 128 to his Tandon PCA-20 (an IBM AT clone). Apparently Brain Boxes made up a special lead to fit the AT serial port and Nick says it works beautifully - he transferred a Superbase database into PC File III with ease and using the Basic demo program provided was able to type at the 128 keyboard and see the characters appear on the Tandon screen and vice versa! Nick goes on to say he has used VizaWrite Classic 128 and has not found a PC word processor to match it.

People sometimes think I've lost some of my marbles when I tell them that the Viza and Precision products for the 128 equal or exceed most similar packages written for most other machines. Letters like Nick's convince me that I don't have to see a shrink just yet. For instance, Geoffrey Davenport also wrote pointing out some bugs in the earlier VizaWrite versions but saying that "Moans over, I still think the package is pretty damn good, it's certainly the best one I've ever come across. And it beats the Amstrad hands down in most other respects."



The bugs Geoffrey referred to have apparently been fixed. His copy didn't want to know any words beginning with I or W and when he tried to ADD them to the dictionary he got WORD ALREADY EXISTS messages. I tried it out on my later version and found no problem. He also had problems with a couple of other items including use of pica font in 90 columns on his Epson RX80 FT+ printer. However, not having one of these printers myself I cannot check that this bug was fixed.

A full review of VizaWrite Classic 128 appears in this issue. Previously a brief one appeared in the Jul/Aug Newsletter but since the ICPUG Editorial team are now going to use it along with a Hewlett-Packard Laserjet Plus printer a more thorough review was deemed appropriate. A few small notes from me, however. VizaWrite Classic 128 can read other WP files easily by loading them using the LOAD MERGE option (as opposed to the 'normal' LOAD option). The reverse is not true - Superscript 128 cannot directly read VizaWrite Classic 128 files. Superscript can however read files from VizaWrite sent to disk as ASCII files but they will need 'cleaning up'.

Another comment I have concerns ease of entry of text - Superscript is the easier one for me. Also, Superscript interfaces with Superbase and that feature I used to write Superdesk which integrates the two into a 'business' system. On the other hand, VizaWrite with its microspaced proportional printer support makes beautiful letters - if you want to impress someone, VizaWrite will do it. I find myself writing and editing with Superscript and then printing it with VizaWrite. Spelling checking is a toss up between the two.

Word processors are a bit like shoes - only the person wearing them really knows how they feel. Having said that, I could live with either Superscript or VizaWrite as my only word processor - the differences between them are swings and roundabouts. Selection will depend mainly on what you are doing. And going one better than either of them is going to cost many hundreds of pounds just for a package to run on an even more costly machine.

MINI OFFICE II

Database Software Ltd., a sister company to the exhibitions organizers for the Commodore shows, have bought out a combination package for the C64/128. When loaded on the 128 it automatically goes into C64 mode. At £19.95 (disk) and £16.95 (cassette) it seems to represent very good value for money, particularly for beginners to serious software. It consists of a word processor, database, spreadsheet, graphics package, label program and two communication programs. While none are in the

Superscript, Superbase, VizaStar, VizaWrite class, they are all quite useful programs. One of the two comms programs is for the Commodore (Compunet) modem while the second is for other types of modems using either 300 or 1200 baud rates. I had previously used the Commodore modem package by itself to access various databases and found it quite useful. Mini Office II comes with a quite reasonable manual and for under £20 one cannot really go wrong. I would recommend it to people starting out in the 'serious' areas or to people needing one or more of the packages to supplement their existing software. An example might be where someone had VizaWrite and Superbase and needed a straightforward basic spreadsheet for, say, household accounts and a comms package for a new modem. You would pay almost £20 for either package on its own. There is now no reason why anyone with a C64 or C128 should be without word processor, spreadsheet and database/label writer program.

1571 and 128 ROM UPDATE

No definite news from Commodore yet on the 1571 and 128 ROM fixes and availability. One unconfirmed report says that version three of the ROM is now in production but this version was the one that we tested in Oct 86 and it failed to fix all the existing bugs. A newer version is supposedly under development (called version 4 or 5 depending on whom one talks to). Australia supposedly has 128s and 1571s with version 3 ROMs on sale and we shall try to get hold of a set of these if possible. In the meantime some members have stated that, contrary to the advice given to me, their local Trading Standards Offices are prepared to take up their cases. It is suggested that one possible avenue for each individual who is affected by these problems is to go see their local Trading Standards Officer. But keep us informed as to what is happening to you if you have this problem. If I have copies of your letters, and the replies thereto, it may help when dealing with various parties to the problem.

1541 and 64 ROM INFORMATION

I understand that two ICPUG members Bill Bremner and Nigel Peters have developed replacement ROMs and associated cabling which will do some very useful things such as speed up loading by around 25-fold, saving by around 10-fold, and which add some extra commands to the system. Their system is to be called Phantom and is said to be an improvement over the 1541 Flash and Dolphin DOS systems. Some of the extra goodies this system will have include the ability to tum over and use the second side of a single-sided disk without cutting a notch; a



diagnostic utility to help install the Phantom; a copier program; and a proper manual in ring binder format. This is to allow upgrades to be released with additional pages that slip into the ring binder. The system currently is for the 64 and the 128 in 64 mode using 1541 drives but I understand that a 128 and 1571 version are planned for future release. We shall try to review this system as soon as it is released. It is supposed to be priced at less than Dolphin DOS.

Meanwhile, another ICPUG member, Tim Raynor, developed what was originally known as the K64 chip for the 128 but is now called the 128 Plus. This chip does nice things like make the numeric keypad, separate cursor keys, no-scroll key, and caps-lock key active in 64 mode. It also assigns some useful defaults to the function keys; adds DOS support and a monitor to 64 mode; and changes the defaults from tape to disk. Other features are included. This chip is marketed by Supersoft. I have installed one on my 128D and find it invaluable. It is frustrating to be able to use the numeric keypad in 128 but not 64 mode. This chip solves that problem. It sells for £19.95 but unfortunately no discount is yet available for members.

HACKER

I thought some of you might be interested in the following info about the interesting term 'Hacker': where it came from and how it has evolved. The term was in use at least as far back as the 1950s at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology when I was a student there. It then meant someone who didn't have much finesse but just spent his life hacking through the jungle of life. Of such a person one would say, in a somewhat derogatory manner, 'He's just a hacker'. Now Hackers were close kin to Tech Tools, another species of MIT student who were socially 'out of it' and more concerned with what type of slide rule they had than whom they dated on Saturday night. (Yes, some people actually carried slide rules around on their belts - remember, this was long before the pocket calculator, let alone the microcomputer, was even dreamt of.) Anyway, later on during the 60s and 70s, the term Hacker became associated with computer buffs, although at MIT some of them were probably better referred to as computer freaks. This meaning of the term Hacker continued in use for some time and today someone like Jerry Poumelle still uses it in his articles for BYTE magazine. But now in the 80s it appears to be acquiring the new meaning of a person breaking into networks and the like, particularly here in the UK. I thought I'd throw this information in for good measure in case you are planning a modified game of Trivial Pursuit.

# EASYSCRIPT DISK DIRECTORY

by David Chastney-Parr

This article was prompted by the VizaWrite article on page 303 of Volume 8, Number 4. Discussing the contents at the regional meeting, I expressed the thought that surely everyone was already aware of techniques such as these, as I had been doing a similar thing with Easyscript. I was reminded of the time when I was new to computers, and was grateful for any tip which would make life easier. So though you, like me, might consider this old hat, it might be of help to someone (and if you're reading this it means that the Editor has decided that it has worth).

The object is to produce a directory of a number of disks. The technique using Easyscript is as follows:

1. Start with an empty text area, or clear the text area with F1/E/A
2. Load the previous global directory if you have one, or load the first directory by F4/+/$ <RETURN>.
3. With the cursor on the next blank line load the next directory, with F4/+/$ <RETURN>
4. Repeat 3 until all the disk directories have been loaded.
5. If you want to print out just one of the disk directories then a forced page break can be inserted after each directory, with F3/fp0 <RETURN>.

5a. The forced page break can be repeated without re-typing, by placing the cursor over the reverse field asterix of the forced page break, then press F1/R and using the cursor to define the fp0 and press <RETURN>.

5b. Then place the cursor at the end of each directory and press F1/A

6. When all the disk directories have been loaded, the complete (global) file can be saved to disk for future reference.
7. If any disk is updated then a revised copy of the contents can be reloaded and the old copy deleted. Position the cursor at the end of the global file before loading the directory, as the F4/+/$ load always overwrites from the cursor position, regardless of whether your using insert mode or not. Then use cut and paste techniques to move the directory to its right place in the file and delete the old copy.

To search for any file name after loading the global directory use F1/S followed by the search information, just press return when asked for the replace information. Then with the cursor at the top of the text,



press F1/H/M to find the first occurrence of the search field (Note upper and lower case are significant). The disk identity can then be obtained. Repeat the search (F1/H/M) if you believe there are other files with the same name on other disks. To search for space on your disks then search for "blocks free" instead of the file name until you find a disk with sufficient space left.

To print out just one directory (if you inserted forced page breaks), then use F1/O/V to page through the directories, pressing space and V until you come to the directory before the one you want to print, then press P. Press STOP to end, or either V or P to view or print next page.

Sorting the file

8. If you wish to sort the entries alphabetically before saving, then replace the file type of each directory as it's loaded, with the disk ID.
9. With the cursor at the top of the directory just loaded, press F1/S followed by the search and replace information. If seq is preceded by a space then the chances of modifying a file name will be reduced, the replace information can be anything, but I use the ID.
10. Then press F1/@/M for the change to be carried out. Repeat after loading each directory.
11. The global file can now be sorted using the word processor cut and paste commands, before it is saved and the changed file type will tell you which disk the file came from. Indeed, you can save copies of both the paged and sorted files if you wish.
12. To update a sorted list load the directory at the end, then change the file type for the disk ID as explained in 9 and 10. Then use cut and paste techniques to update the list, deleting the unchanged entries at the end before saving.

A print out of this sorted list is very useful to prevent the duplicate use of file names which will cause confusion later on.

Like Peter McDonald for Vizawrite, I hope that you find this technique useful with Easyscript.

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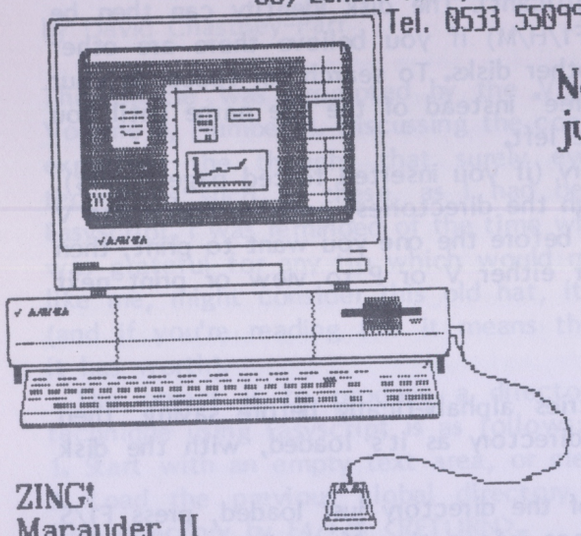

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Jitter Rid - A screen filter which virtually eliminates the screen flickering (the 'jitters') when operating your Amiga in interlaced mode. It also improves the clarity of the monitor and reduces eye strain. Priced at only 19.95, it's a lot cheaper than a high persistance monitor, and can be removed when not required, though you will probably want to leave it on!

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## AUTOMENU

by John Tanner

[Editors' note
The following article and program is in many ways a follow up to John's 'Autosave' routine published in the last newsletter (page 34). As you may remember from last time John does not believe in wasting memory (even though he has 128K of it!) and this leads to compact code to put it mildly. Henry Velleman has spent some time trying to improve the understandability of the listing without affecting its integrity. The program provides an excellent 'user friendly' and automated means of connecting together a diskful of programs. We have run it on both a 64 and 128 with 1541 drive and also a 4032 PET with 4040 drive, and it worked well on all three (the screen control codes will need minor alterations for total compatibility with the PET series).

'Automenu' uses some interesting ideas and is probably best looked upon as a foundation to build on and modify to suit individual needs. If you want to watch how the program uses the 'dynamic keyboard' (as promoted by Jim Butterfield in the original PET version of Adventure) then remove the (CONTROL+7) in lines 140 and 370.

One word of warning: as in the 'Autosave' routine, John abuses the disk command channel 15 (the golden rule should be open 15 at the start of a program and do not close it until the end). Ensure that the programs linked by 'Automenu' have always correctly closed all disk files before they pass control to 'Automenu'.

As an aid to members who wish to use this program, Joe Griffin (address inside rear cover) is able to supply copies on disk (1541/4040 or 8050 format). All the normal software library conditions apply. At the moment this is a one-off item which is not on the normal library disks.]

I use an automenu program on every disk and the version which I used on my previous 8032 had to be modified to operate on my C128. I then found I had to produce a further version for C64 mode. This was highly inconvenient and I have now produced a version which writes its own directory file, selecting program files only, and which operates equally succesfully in C64 or C128 mode, adapting the display automatically for the 40- or 80-column screen. It also functions, by altering the value of one variable, as a 'copyfile' or 'scratchfile' utility when using a dual drive. The listing below is written in a compact form, with few REMs, and contains numerous function characters

I will try to explain its method. Note that function characters all appear in the listing as the '◊' symbol; the actual character and necessary key presses are explained below.

100 Set window to full screen (2* CSR HOME), clear screen (CLR), set text mode (CONTROL+N) and print colour to yellow (CONTROL+8).
110 Set background and border to blue. PEEK for 128 or 64 mode and screen width.
120 Assign variables for location of keyboard queue etc. for 128 mode
130 Ditto for C64 mode and PEEK for my parallel port print driver in memory and skip 140 if it is (delete if print driver not required).
140 Check whether the print driver program is on the disk and, if so, load and run it. (It is designed to reload the automenu when it runs.) The PRINT is CONTROL+7 which chages the print colour to blue, thus making the following text invisible to the eye.
150 Set variable X to 10 or 30 according to screen width. If the 'directory' file is not found on the disk go to the routine at 370 to read and write same.
160 Input the number of entries in the directory file and then input the names into the thus DIMensioned array B$. (Array length to suit batches of nine names).
170 PEEK for the location of the warm start routine
180 Copy next batch of nine names from array B$ to an array A$ for next screen display.
190 Move the cursor according to screen width (CSR RIGHT, CSR DOWN).
200 If there is a next program name print a key number in reverse field followed by the program name (RVS ON, RVS OFF)
210 Skip one line for 40-column screen, two for 80 columns and start new block for item 6 if an 80-col screen (CSR DOWN, 6* CSR RIGHT)
220 Print a prompt for the user to select a program or initialise the directory file or to quit (RVS ON, RVS OFF) and (CSR HOME, CSR DOWN).
230 Get a key press. If 'stop' then if copyfile or scratchfile function is current then load the automenu program otherwise SYS the warmstart.
240 If 'initialise' go to the routine starting at 370.
250 If '0' print the next batch of nine file names.
260 If not a valid entry go to 230 else if automenu function go to 300 else 270.
270 Show the selected file number on the screen and remove any previous selection (CSR UP).
280 Scratch the file from drive 1 (if it exists) and, if in copyfile function, copy the file to drive 1.



290 Display the error channel to confirm whether successful and go to 230 for the next input (4* CSR RIGHT) and (CSR UP).
300 Clear the screen, print the load instruction and the 'run' statement (CLR, 2* CSR DOWN) and (4* CSR DOWN).
310 POKE the keyboard queue etc with character 13 (Retum), home the cursor (CSR HOME), terminate the program to allow dynamic keyboard method to operate a direct mode load/run instruction.
320 Clear screen (CLR) and print the directory header name etc. at top of screen (CSR DOWN).
330 Reverse field (RVS ON) line at top of screen (CSR UP, CSR DOWN, RVS OFF).
340-360 Set up various strings according to screen width etc; 340 (RVS ON) and 360 (2* CSR DOWN).
370 Instruction to load the directory into memory and list it to a temporary disk file (CSR HOME, 2* CSR DOWN, CONTROL+7) & (5*CSR DOWN).
380 Print instruction to close the disk file, load the automenu program again and run line 390 (5* CSR DOWN). Go to 310 to operate the printed instructions using the dynamic keyboard.
390 Open the temporary file to read.
400 Input each entry in file and check for last item ("READY.").
410 Close temporary file. Strip unwanted characters from disk header.
420 Strip file size and leading quote from entry. Check if "PRG" file.
430 Omit any particular files not required to be displayed.
450 Find length of file name up to closing quote.
460 Assign file name to next element of array B$.
470 Scratch the temporary file and open a 'directory' file to write.
480 Write the number of entries and the file names to the file.
490 Screen message (CLR) and (RVS ON).
500 Check for a file on the disk using Boolean Logic.
510 Names of program functions for screen header.
520 Read the function names.
530 Variable f determines current function of program. 0 for automenu, 1 for copyfile and 2 for scratchfile. Edit the value to change the function then 'RUN20000'
20000 Simple save with replace for the program.

One curiosity is that the rather odd solution used in line 400 to check for the end of file when reading the temporary sequential file was the only method I could find which worked in the various combinations of mode and disk drive. The normally recommended practice of checking the variable ST simply did not work in some modes. The

repeated opening and closing of the command channel is not good practice and could possibly be avoided with a little more thought, but bear in mind that it is in one sense three separate programs because of the excursions into direct mode.

The value of the automenu is enhanced if programs which will be run by using it contain the statement 'load"automenu",8' in place of the normal 'end' statement. This will enable the user to remain in program mode at all times rather than being thrown onto the operating system in direct mode. A much more friendly solution.

```
100 PRINT"°°°°°": REM** DISK AUTOMENU BY J TANNER 1986 **VERSION 2.6**
110 POKE53280,6: POKE53281,6: CLR: Y=PEEK(215): GOSUB520: IF(Y OR 128)
    <>128 THEN130
120 BC=2592: BL=208: KQ=841: LI=235: GOTO150:  REM C128 40/80 COLUMNS
130 BC=644: BL=198: KQ=630: LI=214: IF PEEK(50000)=120 THEN150: REMC64
140 A$(I)="AUTOLINK64": Z$=A$(I)+",P,R": GOSUB500: CLOSE2: IF E=0 THEN
    PRINT"°": GOTO300
150 X=10-20*(Y=128): GOSUB490: Z$=X$: GOSUB500: IF E THEN370
160 INPUT#2,J: K=INT((J+8)/9): DIMB$(K*9): FOR P=0 TO J:INPUT#2,B$(P):
    NEXT: CLOSE2
170 CLOSE1: GOSUB340: R=PEEK(65532)+PEEK(65533)*256
180 FOR P=1 TO K: GOSUB320: FOR I=1 TO 9: M=M+1: A$(I)=B$(M): A(I)=
    LEN(A$(I)): NEXT
190 PRINT LEFT$("°°",3-C)
200 FOR I=1 TO 10: IF A(I) THEN L=-I*(I<10): PRINT TAB(T)"°"STR$(L)"°"
    A$(I);
210 PRINT C$: IF C-1 AND I=5 THEN PRINT"°°°°°°°": T=40
220 NEXT: PRINT TAB(C*5)"° SELECT OR I NITIALISE  S TOP °"MID$("°°",C)
230 GETZ$: IF Z$="S" THEN A$(I)="AUTOMENU": ON 2+(F>0) GOTO300: SYS(R)
240 IF Z$="I" THEN GOSUB490: GOTO370
250 IF Z$="0" THEN NEXT: M=0: GOTO180
260 I=VAL(Z$): ON 1+(I>0)*(A(I)>0) GOTO230: IF F=0 THEN300
270 PRINT TAB(C*5+7)"                                °": PRINT TAB(C*5)"°"I;
280 OPEN1,8,15,"S1:"+A$(I): IF F=1 THEN PRINT#1,"C1:"(A$(I))"=0:"A$(I)
290 INPUT#1,E$,EM$: PRINT"°°°°"E$,EM$"°": CLOSE1: GOTO230
300 PRINT"°°°LOAD"Q$"0:"A$(I)Q$",8:": PPINT"°°°°RUN:":J=2
310 POKEBC,9: POKEBL,J: FOR I=1 TO J: POKEKQ+I,13: NEXT: PRINT"°";:END
320 PRINT"°";: ON 3-C GOSUB330: PRINTB$(0)TAB(S)T$(F)T$ (F+3)P;LEFT$
    (" °",C): T=C*5
330 PRINT"°"CS$ MID$("°°°",C);: RETURN
340 C=1-(Y=128): Z=18-40*(C=2): A(10)=1: A$(10)="° NEXT MENU "
350 Z$=" CO-OPSOFT ": FOR L=1 TO Z: A$=A$+" ": NEXT: CS$=Z$+A$+Z$:
    Z=6-13*(C=2): GOSUB520
360 S=13-12*(C=2)-3*(F=0): ON J+1 GOTO320: C$=LEFT$("°°",C): RETURN
370 PRINT"°°°°LOAD"Q$"$0"Q$",8°°°°OPEN2,8,2,"Q$"@0:XXX, S,W"Q$": CMD2:
    LIST"
```



```
380 PRINT"PRINT#2: CLOSE2: LOAD"Q$T$(F)Q$",8°°°°°RUN390": J=4:GOTO310:
    GOTO390
390 GOSUB530: DIMB$(224): OPEN2,8,2,"0:XXX": I=0
400 INPUT#2,B$(I): IF RIGHT$(B$(I),6)<>"READY." THEN I=I+1: GOTO400
410 CLOSE2: B$(0)=MID$(B$(0),5,16): I=I-2: K=0: FOR J=1 TO I: IF F
    THEN440
420 Z$=MID$(B$(J),7): IF MID$(Z$,19,3)<>"PRG" THEN470
430 Y$=LEFT$(Z$,8): IF Y$="DRIV128." OR Y$="LOADER.C" OR Y$="AUTOMENU"
    THEN470
440 Z$=MID$(B$(J),7): B$="": H=1: REM NAME UNWANTED 'PRG' FILES IN LINE
    430
450 IF MID$(Z$,H,1)<>Q$ THEN H=H+1: GOTO450
460 K=K+1: B$(K)=LEFT$(Z$,H-1)
470 NEXT: OPEN1,8,15,"S0:XXX": OPEN3,8,3,"@0:"X$",S,W"
480 PRINT#3,K: FOR J=0 TO K: PRINT#3,B$(J): NEXT: CLOSE3: CLOSE1: RUN
490 PRINT"°": POKELI,23: PRINT: PRINTTAB(X)"° READING DIRECTORY ":
    RETURN
500 CLOSE1: OPEN1,8,15: OPEN2,8,2,"0:"+Z$: INPUT#1,E: E=(E=62): RETURN
510 DATA AUTOMENU,COPYFILES,SCRATCHFILES,,(D0 TO D1),(D1)
520 IF T$(0)="" THEN FOR I=0 TO 5: READT$(I): NEXT
530 F=0: X$="DIRECTORY"+STR$(F): Q$=CHR$(34): RETURN:  REM  F  PROG
    FUNCTION VARIABLE
20000 GOSUB520: SAVE"@0:"+T$(F),8: END: 31.1.87
```

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## C64 COLD/WARM STARTS

Reproduced by courtesy of North Gloucester Group

SYS 64759 Same as pressing STOP/RESTORE. Resets video colours & sound chip, clears the screen and gives READY prompt. Programs in memory not touched.

SYS 64738 Simulates turning computer off then on, but does not destroy memory from start of BASIC ($0800) upwards, reset peripherals on serial bus. Will reset any cartridge in place. An Unnew program will be required if a BASIC program is to be recovered.

SYS 64760 Does not destroy memory from cassette buffer upwards. Unnew will be required to recover a BASIC program. Will not reset any cartridge in place. Will initialize I/O vectors and reset colours.

SYS64763 Same as SYS 64760 except that does not reset I/O vectors.

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# REVIEW—SIDEWAYS

by Jim Kennedy

Sideways is one of those really useful programs which one cannot do without having once used it. If you have ever used a spreadsheet for something like accounts that are kept month by month, you will know that 12 months' figures won't fit across the width of the paper with most printers. You quickly learn that if one could only turn everything by 90 degrees then life would be much easier and the cutting and selotaping of one sheet to another would be things of the past. Sideways does just that: it prints out a spreadsheet sideways. The US company, Timeworks, has introduced this program to the United Kingdom along with word processor, database and spreadsheet packages.

First, a little about Timeworks. It made its first appearance here in the United Kingdom at the first Commodore Show last year. It is a well known US company and has recently launched its series of packages in UK versions. They offer a 30-day money-back guarantee along with a no-charge Customer Support Help Line. They are obviously well versed in providing telephone support to customers as they include a pre-call checklist in their manuals.

Sideways may be purchased in two ways, as a separate program or combined with Timework's Swift Calc spreadsheet. Brian Wise has reviewed Swift Calc (Nov 86 p522) so I shall only talk about Sideways.

I used Sideways with my somewhat long-in-the-tooth Multiplan spreadsheet by Microsoft. The instructions with Sideways covered the printer installation program and configuration of Multiplan's output to a disk file which Sideways then uses to accomplish the actual printing. I used an MPS 801 printer and, since CBM 1525, MPS 801 and MPS 803 printers were the defaults, no changes were required to the printer installation routine. A long list of printers, including Epson, is covered in the manual, as are many printer interfaces. Most of the interfaces are the popular North American types but instructions included allow for many unlisted interfaces to be accommodated. Device number (4 or 5) and number of data bits (7 or 8) may be set as required. In addition to Multiplan and Swift Calc, Sideways is compatible with Better Working Spreadsheet, Calc Now, Cal-Kit, Creative Calc, Practicalc, Practicalc II, Syncalc, Trio and any other C64 or 128 spreadsheet program that create text files in ASCII format on disk or that can interface with Sideways-compatible word processors. However, I understand from Viza Software Ltd that Sideways is not compatible with Vizastar, but I have not actually tested this.



Following the well written instructions I was able to produce a sideways-printed spreadsheet first time from an existing Multiplan file. Since almost nothing is supposed to work first time round with printers, full marks to Sideways for user-friendliness. I had accepted the default setting of Sideways file text format of ASCII and all the alphabetic characters came out in upper-case letters. I next tried using what is called the 'PetASCII' option and the letters came out in lower case as I had originally entered them in the spreadsheet. I should point out that when Microsoft ported Multiplan over to the C64 they chose the wrong C64 character set. This lead to the situation where one cannot print out both upper and lower case letters with Multiplan. Hence my all-lower-case Multiplan file. Sideways, on the other hand, worked exactly as it ws supposed to, with only one minor niggle; it couldn't produce the £ sign. Everywhere I had a £ sign it substituted a backslash. Multiplan produces the £ sign when printed 'normally' so the problem appears to be in the conversion routine which changes the input ASCII code to the output character set printed on the MPS 801. I must point, however, out that in all other respects the output font Sideways uses is actually better than the normal MPS 801 font. The Sideways characters are larger and more readable, have true descenders and are generally better formed. The Sideways printout was a big improvement over the old 'normal' ones.

Sideways will appeal to anyone using a compatible spreadsheet. It is easy to use and does the job as advertised. With the Customer Support Help Line available I can recommend it with confidence. Printers, and especially their interfaces, can be a real 'can of worms', so the Help Line could prove invaluable. If the other Timeworks products match up to Sideways they should be making a large impact in the serious software market in Europe in the next few months. Timeworks products are available through the ICPUG discount scheme. See John Bickerstaff's Discount Corners for current price and availability.

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[This article had to be held over several times: it was originally written way back last Autumn - Eds]

# GEOS UPDATE

by R Massey

The Geos update disk that was briefly mentioned in the last article is now available from First Analytical at a cost of £2 all inclusive. This disk contains the latest drivers for printers and input devices, as well as new versions of the desktop, geopaint, geowrite, photo manager,and text manager. Also provided is a disk copy utility that replaces or can be used alongside the backup program supplied on your Geos master. Before transferring any files from this disk to your work disks it is worth checking to see if you already have the most recent version of that file by clicking on its icon, then moving to the pull-down file menu and clicking on info. This way you will be able to view the date and time of the last amendment. If your file is older than the one on the update disk then it should be replaced.

Desktop (v1.3)
Enhanced version of Desktop which allows keystrokes as an alternative to clicking with a joystick or mouse. Functions supported are: open disk, close disk, and select input driver. These are accessed by pressing the Commodore key in conjunction with O,C,and I respectively. The select input driver option allows scrolling of the available drivers by using the cursor keys, pressing Return makes the selection. The current printer driver selection name now appears below the printer icon that resides in the border area of the desktop.

Disk Copy
This utility should be used for making copies of your work disks; it replaces the earlier backup file, which should be used for making copies of your Geos master disk only.

Geopaint
Geopaint now has improved text scrap handling and automatically restricts the edit box to colour-card boundaries. If you cannot understand the latter comment, then all will be explained in a future article.

Geowrite (v1.3)
This application has undergone major surgery and the latest version number is 1.3. Many keystrokes now invoke functions that previously



required a pull-down menu to be selected. Like the Desktop, keystrokes consist of holding down the Commodore key and another key simultaneously. Edit functions are C= X for cut, C= C for copy, though strangely there is no shortcut for the paste command as yet. Functions under the options menu can be called up using C= (backarrow),C= +,C= G, and C= L for, Previous page, Next page, Goto page, and Page break respectively. Geowrite v1.3 should not be confused with the Writers Workshop application that bears the filename Geowrite v2.0; the latter is a full word-processing package.

Input drivers
Three new input drivers are supplied on the upgrade disk together with a later version of the joystick (default) driver that will accept input from a Commodore 1350 mouse. The three new devices catered for are the Commodore proportional mouse, the Inkwell Systems light pen, and the Koala Pad graphics tablet.

Printer drivers
The number of printers catered for by Geos are now far too numerous to mention. However, it is worth saying that there are now three types of driver available. Some require the use of a printer interface connected to the serial port; others an RS232 interface; and the final group utilise the user port for direct drive of parallel printers. Geos is now capable of driving more than 70 different devices, and given the Epson compatibles, the number may run into hundreds. Worthy of note are the Hewlett Packard Laserjet, Imagewriter, and Imagewriter II. (Editor, take note). All previous printer drivers have been rewritten in order to increase the speed of obtaining hard copy. If anyone using Geos happens to have a Cosmos-80 printer (like myself), then they will find that either the Bluechip or Epson MX-80 driver works very well through the user port on a centronics cable. For those using centronics printers, First Analytical will be marketting a suitable cable.

In summary, the updates are excellent value and well worth obtaining, although there will always be room for further improvement in the eyes of some users. The addition of keystroke commands provides a faster means of implementing functions in applications whilst maintaining compatibility for those who wish to use the pull down menus. On the whole, two quid well spent.

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# DATA FROM PET TO PC

by Hugh de Glanville

I wrote the following program in a hurry for a specific need, to get ASCII data files (exported from Superbase) over from a PET to a PC - at that time an Apricot. I had no time to get commercial software; I merely wanted to cobble together a quick method of transferring my data. It so happened that at the time I had just heard of Jim Butterfield's 'String thing' routine, so I used this instead of INPUT# to read my data from disk. I was outputting through a Small Systems RS232 interface that offered code reversal, so I did not have to worry about the fact that the source files were in PETSCII.

I did not attempt any kind of handshaking, I simply sent the data over to the Apricot's ASYNC comms program which beeps when it is overrun, and introduced a delay loop (see line 440) until the Apricot no longer complained. I have subsequently used it to send data to an IBMalike running KERMIT equally successfully.

The database program I was intending to use on the Apricot at that time required that fields be enclosed in double-quotes and separated by a comma, and records terminated by a carriage return. Finally, MSDOS required that the file be terminated by chr$(26) (control Z).

Not being able to detect the end of the PET data file and put in this terminator reliably, I simply counted my records, 'manually' added a carriage return to each last line (line 500), and 'manually' sent a terminator when the last record was through (line 550).

In practice I found it desirable to have a number of records divisible by 11 or I lost the last few records, up to 10. I had no very clear idea why this was, or whether the figure of 11 only applied to records of roughly the length I use (10-15 fields), but I had no time to reason why, I simply added dummy records to files to be transferred until the record count was divisble by 11.

I echo outgoing data to the screen and print the count after each record firstly and most importantly to be sure I have specified the field count correctly; secondly to know how the transfer is getting on.

I have never felt such an ad hoc program would be of much interest to others, so I kept quiet about it, but recently I have been persuaded that someone might be able to pick something useful out of it. I feel sure it could be done much more elegantly, but it does what I need and goes on doing it, so I have never spent any time looking for alternatives or trying to improve it.



```
 10 REM "DATAFILE TRANSFER PROGRAM VIA RS232 INTERFACE
 20 :
 30 REM **STRING THING (UNIVERSAL)**
 40 REM **     JIM BUTTERFIELD     **
 50 REM STRING MUST BE FIRST VARIABLE
100 A$="*JIM BUTTERFIELD*"
110 A$=A$+A$+A$+A$
120 A$=A$+A$+A$
130 :
140 REM ABOVE SETS STRING AT MAX (255)
150 :
200 DATA 160,2,177,42,153,134,0,200,192,6
210 DATA 208,246,162,1,32,198,255
220 DATA 32,228,255,201,13,240,15,164,139,145
230 DATA 137,200,132,139,196,136,240,4,165,150,240,234,76,204,255
240 :
250 FORJ=896 TO 937
260 READ X: POKE J,X
270 T=T+X: NEXT J
280 IF T<>6108 THEN STOP
290 :
300 PRINT "                    FILE TRANSFER PROGRAM": PRINT: PRINT
350 INPUT "FILENAME";D$
360 INPUT "NO OF RECORDS";N
370 INPUT "NO OF FIELDS";FJ
380 FJ=FJ-1
390 OPEN 2,4: T=0
400 OPEN 1,8,3,(D$)
410 FOR X=1 TO N
420 REM FJ= TOTAL FIELDS -1: LAST FIELD DEALT WITH BY LINE 500
430 FOR J=1 TO FJ: GOSUB 5000
440 FOR M=1 TO 15: NEXT M: REM "DELAY WHICH MAY BE ADJUSTED TO SUIT
450 PRINT#2, CHR$(34);LEFT$(A$,L);CHR$(34);CHR$(44);
460 PRINT CHR$(34);LEFT$(A$,L);CHR$(34);CHR$(44);
470 NEXT J
480 :
490 GOSUB 5000
500 PRINT#2, CHR$(34);LEFT$(A$,L);CHR$(34);CHR$(13);CHR$(10);
510 PRINT CHR$(34);LEFT$(A$,L);CHR$(34);CHR$(13);CHR$(10);
520 T=T+1: PRINT: PRINT T
530 NEXT X
540 :
550 PRINT#2, CHR$(26): REM "CONTROL Z REQUIRED BY MSDOS
560 CLOSE1: CLOSE2
570 END
580 :
5000 SYS 896
5010 L=PEEK(139)
5020 RETURN
```

# PET TALKS TO PC

by Peter Reynolds

When an established PET user, say with a business system like the CBM 8096, decides to follow Chuck Peddle and change to a PC clone, he must face the problem of transferring his valuable data to the new machine. At the time when Commodore launched the PC 10 and PC 20 this was no easy matter; most of the established data transfer agencies would not touch it and a local dealer in Commodore business systems found it heavy going to satisfy customers who demanded this service.

Now there is turnkey solution on offer. With the 3D Digital IEEE to PC package you have only to plug in three cables to the interface box provided, boot software disks in the PET and PC systems and follow the instructions that appear on screen. The cables are self-evident, impossible to confuse. One is the regular IEEE-488 connection from CBM computer to the interface, the second is a familiar 25 pin RS 232C cable with a male plug to the interface box and a female one to the computer, and a third is an ordinary mains lead to power the interface. The disks provided will suit respectively a CBM 8050 or 8250 disk drive and a PC with DOS 2.1 or above: I found it worked equally well under DOS 2.1 in a Compaq portable and under DOS 3.2 in an Amstrad PC 1512.

Having an early copy of Precision Software's Superbase Personal for the PC, I had decided, rashly as it turned out, to port membership records across from Superbase on the 8096. I had already created an Export file in the donor system, very easily done from the Superbase menus, though rather time-consuming with some 1800 records to move.

Each computer showed a virtually identical screen which offered the choice of making a transfer or exit. I selected the former, of course, and was then asked to enter the name of the file to be sent (from the PET) or to be created (on the PC). Then I was advised to press return on either machine in quick succession although in fact one kilobyte input and output buffers in the interface would take care of any small delays.

With the SERIALCM programs originally supplied, the data could now be seen scrolling up the screen windows on both sender and receiver computers and the comfort this gave largely compensated for the slowness of transfer, which looked more like 300 baud than the 9600 to which the interface was set. Apparently the formatting of data for screen display held it up and a revision of the software, yet to be tried by the writer but seen in operation, speeds the transfer up



considerably, as well as bringing other enhancements. Though the screen appears lifeless, there is evidence of activity in the flashing of a LED on the interface. My exported file held 1800 records averaging about 300 characters of data in a potential aggregate field length of nearly 1000 characters. They went across at about 400 records an hour and took 4 1/2 hours in all.

The transfer seemed almost clean but the one or two glitches I discovered, like an extra carriage return before the first record and an extra field marker between records, were enough to scupper the importing into the PC database program and my fumblings with the unfamiliar WIMPy (Windows, Icons, Mouse Protocol) commands of Superbase Personal soon managed to corrupt the transferred files, which I had neglected to back up. A few further attempts to experiment with shorter files were no more successful because the ancient Superbase records with which I started were, I think, imperfect.

And there the venture rests until I can give it more time. The 3D interface seems excellent for its advertised purpose of transferring data from CBM to PC and I have seen Wordcraft files moved across satisfactorily, but importing the data into a PC database - and I have tried some others as well as Superbase - is tricky because a single character can kill the essential synchronisation.

The package, as supplied, comprises interface box, mains cable and two disks of software: connecting cables to the two computers are not provided. For the CBM connection it is the standard IEEE-488 cable, readily available: the user may have a spare one already, or may be able to borrow the one that normally serves his printer. But RS232C cables are not so standard as the innocent would suppose, and the user may have to wire one up as I did or use a 'straight through' cable with a breakout box to allow the requisite cross-connections to be patched. Only seven wires are used and the symmetrical wiring (2 to 3, 3 to 2, 4 to 6 & 8, 5 to 20, 6 & 8 to 4, 20 to 5) would be self-evident to the knowledgeable but could daunt the business user, particularly as such cross-connecting rules out the use of the insulation displacement plugs which are so easy to use with ribbon cable. There is nothing for it but to solder up the seven 7 wires and two jumpers required; therefore I would suggest that 3D should include this RS232C cable in the package, as indeed, the manual suggests was the intention.

The interface box, measuring 9 inches by 5 by 2.5 high, is visibly well and robustly made. The front panel is bare save for midget LEDs indicating mains on, talk and listen and a colourful 8-way dip-switch for selecting the device address and the baud rate. The latter's 16

options range from 50 to 19200 and they can also be changed by software but it must be the same in either direction, a split rate like the 1200/75 favoured by Compunet is not possible. The address switches can be set to any value from 0 to 15: as supplied, the address was 10 and baud rate 9200.

On power-up the interface expects data in 8-bit units, without stop bit or character conversion from CBM to ASCII and using DTR and CTS signals for input and output handshake controls respectively but all these items, as well as the baud rate and both listen and talk addresses (which may differ), can be reset by software in a byte or two, as described in the manual. The manual runs to 12 pages of A4 typescript, is very clear and succinct and seems entirely adequate; for my data transfer activity from PET to PC everything I needed to know was on the last page and that page was far from full. Computing will be easier when we have more manuals like that.

My thanks to Dr K T Kibasi, Director of 3D Digital Design and Development Ltd, for lending the interface. They are at 18/19 Warren Street, London W1P 5DP (telephone 01 387 7388) where they make a wide variety of fine interface equipment, particularly to the IEEE-488 standard. The price of the package reviewed is £200 plus VAT but see Discount Corner for details of discounts available to members of ICPUG.

--oOo--

## MANDELBROT NEWSLETTER

Further to his article on 'The Mandelbrot Set' in the Nov/Dec Newsletter (page 455), Eddie Syratt has sent us a copy of a newsletter called 'AMYGDALA' devoted to this subject and published in the USA. The first issue is a professionally laid out and typeset four pages of A4 packed with ideas and sample plots for the 'Mandelbrot Fanatic'. Issue 2 promises screen dumps in colour, which should be amazing.

If you are interested in finding out more, then either contact Eddie at 14 Branch Hill Rise, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL53 9HW, or write direct to AMYGDALA, Box 219, San Cristobal, NM87564, USA. An overseas 10-issue subscription is $25.

--oOo--



## AMIGA-WATCH

by Mike Todd

As the Amiga is an addition to an existing range of Commodore computers, it is not surprising that many C64/C128 owners (not to mention PET, 700 and 8000 users) have 'upgraded' to it. Once this happened, it was inevitable that there would be a demand to transfer files from the 'old' machine to the Amiga.

The only method worthy of consideration is to use the RS232 port of the Amiga and to transfer data from the 'old' machine along this link. With machines like the 700 series and other Commodore machines with a full RS232 implementation, the job is relatively straightforward. With the C64/C128 it is not difficult either, provided you have the RS232 cartridge - for PETs and 8000 series, it is difficult as there are few RS232 interfaces available.

The hardware connection is not the only stumbling block, however. The Amiga uses true ASCII codes, whilst existing Commodore machines use an odd variant, nicknamed PETSCII, and a method of converting from PETSCII to ASCII is going to be needed at one end or the other. This conversion could be performed on the original source file prior to transfer, during transfer, or on the destination file once it is received.

Assuming an RS232 connection can be established, transfer is probably best achieved using one of the many terminal programs available. Alternatively, a simple GET/PRINT loop can be used at both ends. Whatever method is used, I would limit the baud rate to a maximum of 1200 baud since no handshaking is likely to be available without considerable effort, and buffers may start to overflow if too much data is receievd too quickly.

If anyone has any specific software that they use to do such transfers, or has any advice on the practice, perhaps I could suggest a short article for the newsletter as there are many who would like to perform this transfer operation as painlessly as possible.

### ED and CLI

Brian Grainger mentioned the need for a reference card for ED (the Amiga's text editor) and the CLI. I would agree that this would be very useful and may consider including one in a future newsletter. However, such reference cards do exist on the DOCUMENTS library disk - and also in Compute!'s AmigaDOS reference guide.

## REDEFINING KEYBOARD

Another comment from Brian was regarding the keyboard layout - the fact that the double-quotes key is in an odd place is a major source of irritation. With version 1.1, it is not possible to redefine this key without major effort - however, version 1.2 of the operating system does allow altemative key-mapping.

Keymaps for several different countries are provided with version 1.2 and are invoked using the SETMAP command. From the CLI, the command

SYSTEM/SETMAP GB

will set the keyboard to a UK standard - this includes the double quotes as shifted-2. The UK pound sign appears as shifted-3 (while the hash appears as shifted-ALT-3) and one or two other key definitions are changed. As it stands, there are 12 keymaps provided in the devs/keymaps directory. Watch out for USA2 as it appears to be designed for a totally different keyboard layout and you'll have to hunt around for the letters to restore to USA (the default keymap).

At the present moment, I don't have any information on the format of the keymap files - although from a brief examination the file structure appears to be more complex than I'd imagined. The files contain several parameters - obviously they need to cope with the various key modes (such as shifted/ALT/CTRL etc.) as well as determining whether keys will repeat, will 'lock' using CAPS LOCK and so on.

I'll be looking into this more thoroughly and try to come up with an easy way of modifying these files to your own requirements.

## TYPE COMMAND

I've mentioned the TYPE command a couple of times in previous columns. One thing I haven't emphasised are the two options available:

TYPE filename OPT N

will add a line number to the start of every line, while:

TYPE filename OPT H

will do a hex dump of the file, with ASCII characters also shown.

## MESSY ICONS

Those of you with version 1.2 may be interested in a very odd bug that has persisted with version 1.2 from early days. The best way to describe it is to demonstrate it.



First of all, boot up 1.2 WorkBench, click into the SYSTEM drawer and activate the SAY program.

Now, click into the INPUT window and type anything that will take quite a while to say - then press retum.

While the Amiga is speaking to you, pick up one of the icons (perhaps from the SYSTEM drawer) and try moving it about the screen. As you will already know, on 1.2 a copy of the icon image moves around the screen rather than the strange red pointer - but if the Amiga is saying something, fragments of the icon will be deposited on the screen producing a very messy effect.

There's no real problem with this (as far as I can tell), although it may take a bit of work to get the screen back to normal. I don't know what the cause of this 'bug' is - it may be the signs of something more sinister, or it may just be an oddity. Time will tell!

## WORKBENCH v CLI

I don't want to go into too much detail, but I think that it is important to point out that there is a major difference between the way that programs execute when invoked from the CLI compared with double-clicking an icon.

The major difference is that, from the CLI, there already exists a window into which all 'standard' input and output can be directed. From the WorkBench, this is not necessarily the case and programs written in 'C' for instance need to be careful about how and where they send their output, and where they look for keyboard input.

If a 'C' program is compiled under 'normal' circumstances, the normal start code will create a window automatically when invoked from the WorkBench (if you've seen my TYPER program in the library, you'll notice this small window pop up very briefly before the main window opens up). In theory, the specification for this window (its size and position etc.) is contained in the .info file asociated with the program, but in practice there is a bug which appears to prevent this from working as it should.

The other major difference between the two methods of executing a program is the way that parameters are passed to the program.

With the CLI, there can be a series of parameters included within the command line. A typical example is the COPY command where the format:

COPY filename1 TO filename2

retums four parameters to the program (when using 'C' these can be considered as an array of strings). The first is the actual command

that was used (i.e. COPY), then "filename1", "TO", and "filename2". It is up to the program to investigate these parameters and do with them what it will.

From WorkBench, things are different. For a start, the user cannot easily pass parameters in the same way. Instead, there are two methods of passing parameters. The first is to use the multiple icon selection option. First, select the main program icon by clicking on it - now hold down a SHIFT key and select one or more other icons (they will all remain selected). When the final icon is selected, double click it and the initial icon selected will be executed with the filenames associated with the additional icons passed as parameters to the program. Note that the program must be set up to handle these parameters.

An alternative way of passing parameters is provided by the .info file. Select an icon by clicking on it, and then use the INFO option in the WORKBENCH menu to examine the contents of the info file. You will see various parameters associated with the file, such as the file's size, its status (deletable or not deletable), the size of the stack to be set on entry to the program (click in the box and enter the required stack size), a comment, and a box marked TOOL TYPES. This last box is another way of passing parameters to the program.

Take the SETMAP command mentioned earlier in this column. Click on the icon, and select INFO. Click on the ADD box and then click in the TOOL TYPES window. Now type KEYMAP=GB and click on the SAVE box.

Next time you double click on the SETMAP icon, the parameters from the TOOL TYPES in the .info file will be passed to the program. In this case, KEYMAP=GB will cause SETMAP to make the GB keymap active and any program activated thereafter will use the new keymap. Again, the program needs to know all about the usage of these parameters.

These differences between CLI and WorkBench are the main reason why some programs will work only under CLI or only under WorkBench. The software author has to write his code assuming one or other (or both) environments and many choose to write for only one.

MOUSE or KEYBOARD

You may already realise that, even without a mouse connected, the mouse functions are available from the keyboard.

For instance, by holding down one of the Amiga keys (left and right of the space bar), the cursor control keys will move the mouse pointer slowly at first then faster as the key is held down.



The left mouse button can be simulated using the left-hand Amiga and ALT keys pressed together and the right mouse button with the right-hand Amiga and ALT keys. The pointer can still be moved when these keys are pressed allowing icons to be moved, menu selections made and so on.

Two other keyboard features are worth remembering. Firstly, whenever a program has generated a new screen and pushed the WorkBench screen to the back, the WorkBench screen can be brought to the front by pressing the left-Amiga key and 'n' - it can be pushed back again by left-Amiga and 'm'.

For those with version 1.2, an additional keyboard feature is implemented. When a requester box pops up, the left hand box can be activated by pressing 'v' with an Amiga key, and the right hand box by 'b' and the Amiga key. Note that this only applies in some cases, and is not universally true I'm afraid.

ECHO AND THE SCREEN

One of the methods of sending characters to the screen during an EXECUTE sequence is to use the ECHO command. The normal startup-sequence uses this, for instance, to give the WorkBench version message and so on.

However, with the ability of the CLI to handle some of the ESC sequences outlined last time for changing the colour or presentation of text, it is frustrating apparently not to be able to send ESC sequences from within the ECHO command. Well, it is posssible!

It appears to be a hangover from BCPL (the language used for part of the operating system) and it may not be a feature that can be relied upon. However, if you use the sequence "*e", this will be interpreted as ESC. Therefore ECHO "*e[33m" will cause text to be written in orange - the other ESC sequences quoted last time also work.

Another "*" sequence is "*n" which can be included in a line of text and will generate a new-line at that point.

As a result of this quiirk, the "*" cannot be included in ECHO strings without being included in pairs!

--oOo--

# IEEE—COMAL COMPATIBILITY NOW

by David Chastney-Parr

As Brian Wise reviewed Brain Boxes' IEEE 488 Interface in the Sept/Oct 1986 issue (page 427), let me just advise of you of my personal experiences.

I decided to purchase a 4040 dual drive from Precision Software, as advertised in ICPUG Volume 8, Number 3 which had been made available by CBM's closure of Corby. As you will be aware from my previous articles, I am always cautious when purchasing new equipment and software. So you will not be surprised to hear that I took along my computer and software to Worcester Park on Saturday 14th June last. (Yes, Precision Software are open on Saturdays.)

I also needed an IEEE parallel interface to be able to connect the 4040 to my 64. The obvious choice was Brain Boxes' IEEE interface which is distributed by Precision Software. I was lent an interface and shown into a room complete with an Amiga, which I attempted to ignore while I connected my 64 to the 4040. All went well until I tried my Comal cartridge in the memory expansion slot on top of the IEEE interface. Responding to the IEEE cartridge sign-on message, "PRESS S FOR SIMONS BASIC", with any key press would initialise the Comal cartridge, but the 4040 drive was not accessible.

My thanks must first go to Precision Software, for they contacted Eamonn Walsh of Brain Boxes there and then. Having heard the symptoms, Eamonn offered to look into the problem for me. I sent my Comal cartridge and manual to Brain Boxes, and Eamonn eventually developed version 3.0 of the 64/128 IEEE 488 interface. They even retumed my Comal cartridge to me, as I needed it, during the development period.

Similar to the previous version, the sign-on screen of version 3.0 now says "PRESS S FOR SIMONS BASIC" and "PRESS C FOR COMAL". To initialise any other cartridge, such as the Compunet Modem, you have to press any other key. So all you Comal users out there don't have to limit yourselves to the 1541, or to getting a Buscard II from the States.

Now some points that were not raised by Brian Wise:

1. To use the IEEE interface with the Compunet Modem, you have to type SYS51209 to boot the IEEE code after the modem sign-on screen is shown. However, neither the built in DOS support or Bob Fairbaim's DOS Manager V5.1 can be used with the modem as DOSdoes not appear on the



duckshoot menu. So, although you can access and store files via the IEEE interface, directories cannot be read. Brain Boxes say they are looking into this with the writers of the Compunet software.

2. The manual which comes with the interface (in fact there are currently 2), refers to using a motherboard with the IEEE interface. However, it makes more sense to put the motherboard into the memory expansion slot on top of the interface, in order for the selected cartridge to be initialised. One point must be remembered, however: only those cartridges which use the vectors to access the disk, can benefit from the IEEE interface.

3. With no cartridge in the memory expansion slot and 64 mode selected by the switch on the interface, the sign-on messages "BRAIN BOXES CBM 64 IEEE V3.0", "CENTRONICS DRIVER FROM USER PORT", "SYS49152 FOR DOS", only remain on screen for a few seconds before it clears, and the normal 64 power-on messages are shown, the only difference being that the character colour is now white. To enable the IEEE interface you should then type in SYS51215:POKE56,128:CLR as the first command. This reduces the store available to BASIC by 8k bytes. The revised built in DOS support is activated by SYS49152.

4. The centronics interface is normally only used if no IEEE device 4 is present, but I have found that printers attached to both serial IEEE and user port can be selected as required without conflict, by responding to the Easyscript sign-on screen. Both printers being notionally device 4 and both being switched on. The Easyscript sign-on screen can be obtained without loss of data by pressing RUN/STOP - RESTORE. The built in centronics interface can also be disabled by a Poke; for 64 mode POKE645,32 and for 128 mode POKE2574,32.

I must repeat the recommendation of Brian Wise for this product, and add my thanks to Eamonn Walsh and his team at Brain Boxes.

--oOo--

# SUPER★ CORNER

edited by Jim Kennedy

## CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Precision Software Ltd have changed the hours for their Customer Support telephone line to 1:30 to 5:30 pm weekdays. This should be welcomed by almost everyone as it avoids the more expensive moming 'phone rates. All will also be pleased that they have abandoned plans to charge for future customer support. We at ICPUG were not happy with this idea; Precision's decision is to be applauded.

## NON-ENGLISH VERSIONS OF SUPERBASE AND SUPERSCRIPT

Some of these versions are written for Commodore machines with non-US/UK keyboards. This may cause problems when trying to port application programs from one country to another. The only solution would appear to be to list the program, modify it to match the machine it is to run on and then save the new version back to disk.

## 1571 DISK DRIVES AND SUPERBASE

Precision have stated those people who bought version 2.06 of Superbase 128 for use with the 1571 drive may obtain an upgrade to version 2.07 by sending their 2.06 disk and £1.00 to cover postage and packing to their offices at Worcester Park. This offer only applies to version 2.06 which came out for the 1571. Earlier versions for the 1570 drive (2.00 through 2.05) may be upgraded to the 1571 2.07 version for the normal price of £10.00.

## THE RETURN OF THE CARRIAGE

Paul Blair from Down Under sent the following short article which I shall pass on unexpurgated.

This all has to do with the unwanted carriage retum and its swom enemy, the semi-colon. Superbase does a lot of jobs for me, among them a mailing list or two. Way back when my old PET printer did the work, speed was not so critical. But with more jobs to do, I try to get a tiny bit efficient.

Rather than use Superbase sort etc. to fling words out to my printer I find it much quicker (by about 50%) to write a sequential file and sort and print labels from BASIC. The Superbase commands "OPEN" and "DETAIL" work quickly and accurately, so I do (or rather, did) this:



```
10 file "members"
20 open "h8grabbit":select f
30 detail &[surname]&[adr1]$[adr2]&[adr3]
40 select n:eof 200
50 goto 30
200 close:across:wait:menu
```

That worked fine. Now some BASIC. As there are four fields written out, I recall the fields in groups of four strings, do some setup, and print them. All that is fine until you get to the last record.

My BASIC uses INPUT# for speed reasons and I test the variable ST for the end of each file. But Superbase has done it! After the very last complete record is a carriage retum - just one - that gets in the way. INPUT# and ST get tangled up and my BASIC can't recognize the end of the file. Woe is me!

Sure, I could use GET# in place of INPUT#, but the only reason for all this is a whack of speed . . . so cancel GET#. But here is where my trusty semi-colon comes in. If I rewrite line 30 to

```
30 detail &[surname]&[adr1]$[adr2]&[adr3];
```

everything works for me. You did notice the semi-thingo on the end?

After some other excursions into this sort of thing, I suggest you include the semi-colon when writing sequential files in this way. Just why the last field in a file made this way is a carriage retum only Precision know. Maybe it's needed, but if not, perhaps they could be persuaded to amend Superbase to get rid of it.

Super* Corner Editor's notes to above. The carriage retum is used not only as a field and a record separator but as a file separator as well. In the Amiga version one can change the field separator default, a comma, and record separator, a carriage retum. I would use the OUTPUT TO command to avoid the carriage retum problem. Please be aware that some versions of Superbase 128 have a bug in the OPEN command which I understand Precision are working on fixing. This presents few serious problems as one can always print to disk using

```
10 pdev 8,8,8
20 print "listing"
30 list
40 pdev 0
```

which would print the current program listing to a disk file. See Superbase The Book, page 159, for more details.

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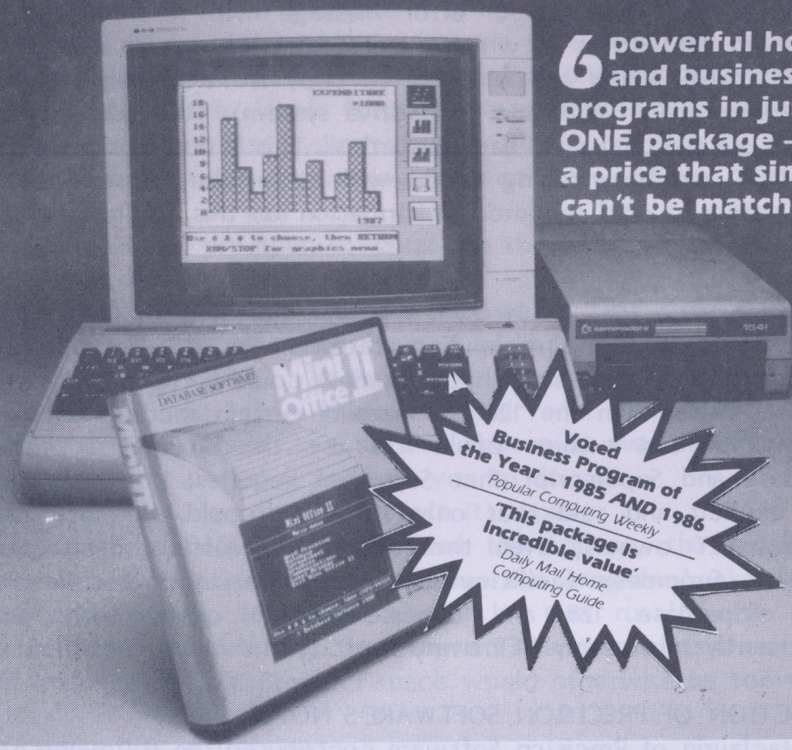


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## DUAL VERSUS TWIN DRIVES

One cannot, as some members have apparently tried to do, use two single disk drives such as 1541 or 1571 drives in lieu of a twin disk drive for things like backups. An error message will result unless one is using twin 1571 drives in which case a ROM bug opens another file on the 1571 drive which one is trying to copy from (i.e. drive 0 but then both are really drive 0 in a twin drive system). You must have a dual drive to use the dual drive backup method. This is due to the Commodore drive DOS and has nothing to do with Superbase, Superscript or any other program. Also see more information on this topic under the PSL Notes below.

## SUPERDESK

I must apologize for a misleading statement in SUPER* CORNER in the Nov/Dec Newsletter. I said that Superdesk could be useful for owners of machines other than the 128 for learning certain routines and went on to say that C64 owners could not use the integrated features of Superbase and Superscript that Superdesk requires. I should have been more explicit and said that only 128 users could use the integrated features. PET owners, even those using Superoffice, cannot use the complete Superdesk facilities as Superoffice lacks certain features which Superbase 128 and Superscript 128 offer. Sorry to have inadvertently misled any PET owners.

## COLLECTION OF PRECISION SOFTWARE'S NOTES

Pete Maclaurin of Precision Software contributed the following notes to the column for this month. These notes are based on the notes PSL send out to customers. I shall include them with only minimal editing so as to ensure they remain similar to those distributed by PSL.

## SUPERBASE LABELS PROGRAM

Extracting information from the database for printing labels (when doing a 'mailshot' for example) requires three operations:

1) Create a file of information in the database and make a find list or sort list containing the record keys that you wish to print labels for.

2) Set up a label definition to match the required format.

3) Merge the data (selected by the key list if required) into the label format and print the result.

To cover these points in more detail, first create the data. To do this all your data must be in one file of the database. This file



should be the current file, and you must know the names of the fields you used when formatting the file. You must have enough room on the disk to take the label definition, the labels program, the makelabels program and the key list if you intend using one. Use the find and/or sort commands as described in the reference section of the Superbase manual if you want to select records instead of printing the whole file.

Secondly, define the label format. Move both 'makelabels' and 'labels' from the Superbase system disk to your work disk by loading them from the system disk then saving them on the workdisk. (Or use the utility or Copy-All if you have twin drives). Execute the labels program. Follow the prompts to create a definition for your labels, noting in particular:

a) Use an existing layout file? . . . answer n first time or if you don't want to re-use a definition created earlier. Answer y if you do.

b) Layout filenames . . . lstore is the default name, but you can use any name that you have not already used for a file, keylist etc.

c) Lines between labels . . . do not choose 2, even if the version of the program you are using prompts you to do so!

d) Data types . . . key fields are Text (t) type.

Third, print the labels. Having defined the format, the labels are printed by 'labels.p'. This program will run the program 'makelabels.p' to define the format, 'makelabels.p' will in tum run 'labels.p' once more, which does the printing. The program is in two parts to allow it to run in machines whose program space would otherwise be too small.

## SEARCH DATES FOR A MONTH

Using Superbase to search dates for a month (year-independent searching) is as below and the format of [date] is English rather than US. The file definition must include an extra field at the bottom called [flag] or have an unused text field available instead.

```
10 ask "Month to report on" b$ : date "01"+b$+"86",a : if a=0 then 10
20 select f
30 convert [date],a$
40 a$=mid$(a$,3,3)
50 if a$=b$ then calc [flag] = "1" : store
60 eof goto 1000
70 select n : goto 30

1000 find "" where [flag] is "=1"
2000 batch all [flag] = ""
3000 menu
```

This generates a key list of all records where the month matches and clears the flag field for a subsequent enquiry.

DETAILS OF SUPERSCRIPT FILE STRUCTURE USING TABDATA

In Superscript, end of text is always marked with a null/zero byte ($00). If TabData follows then a 255 byte follows the null byte ($FF). (TabData is not saved with a ranged block, nor with early versions of the wordprocessor program. EasyScript does not save TabData for example.) After the 255 byte there are a further 152 bytes of Tab information as follows:

a) byte 1 is a count byte for the number of Horizontal tabs set. (default 25)

b) byte 2 is a count byte for the number of Vertical tabs set. (default 0)

c) bytes 3 to 52 (50 bytes) are the Horizontal tab information. (see below)

d) bytes 53 to 102 (50 bytes) are the low bytes of Vertical tab information

e) bytes 103 to 152 (50 bytes) are the corresponding high bytes.

f) horizontal tabs: 255 indicates no tab. Other numbers up to 254 indicate the column in which the tab is set

g) vertical tabs: 32767 or 65535 indicates no tab. Numbers greater than 32767 indicate that the corresponding horizontal tab is a text (as opposed to numeric) tab.

In other words the first 15 bits (0 to 14) are the vertical tab position. The highest (16th bit 15) position indicates the type of horizontal tab (numeric if clear, text if set). Default tabs are set as horizontal text-type at positions 0,9,19,29, . . . etc. up to 139. All tabs can be cleared or set from the SuperScript menu.

MORE ON MAIL MERGE

Using Superbase and Superscript together for mail merge is handled by extracting information from the database for use in a standard letter (when doing a 'mailshot', for example). It requires three operations:

1) create a file of information from the database. This is a 'sequential' or 'fill' file

2) set up a word processed document to match the format of the file.

3) Merge the fill file into the document and print the result

To cover these points in more detail, first we create the fill file. Here all your data must be in one file of the database. This file must be the current file, and you must know the names of the fields you used when formatting the file. You must have enough room on the disk to take the fill file, bearing in mind that it is not compacted in any way. Use the output command as described in the Reference section of the Superbase Manual with the fill option:

```
output all fill to "fillfile" [name][street][town]
```

This creates a file containing the fields in the order you specify (this may not be the order they appear in the database), empty fields appearing as blank lines. In addition an extra blank line is used to separate one record from the next.

You may wish to select only those records you have previously found by using the find command. For example:

```
find "findlist" where [county] is "=Bucks"
```

then

```
output from "findlist" fill to "fillfile" [name][street][town]
```

Having already created a fill file you may wish to add to it. This may be done by using the append syntax, for example:

```
output from "extralist" to "fillfile,a" [name][street][town]
```

The ',a' here will add the information found by "extralist" to the existing fill file "fillfile". This is called appending.

Remember that if the fill file you create is longer than the maximum text length allowed in the wordprocessor you will not be able to edit it. If this is a problem, create more than one fill file (each of a shorter length with a unique name) by using key lists created by the find command.

Secondly, you must set up the document to receive the data from the fill file. This is described in both the Reference and Tutorial sections of the word-processor manual. One further point should be noted however. Because the records in a fill file are separated by a blank line, it is often necessary to 'trap' this line in a 'dummy' variable block:

```
*nb this is a dummy block < >
```

or

```
*cm this is a dummy block [ ]
```

The exact syntax depends on the particular version of Superscript you are using. The comment and the 'dummy' block should be placed after all the 'genuine' blocks in the document, the best place is the end of the document. Placing a block in a comment in this way 'traps' the blank

line in the document and does not print it.

Thirdly, you must merge the document with the fill file. Once again this is described in the manual. Several points are worth emphasizing however. If you 'sample' the output, remember to clear the document and reset the fill file to the start before you do the final printing operation. Merging in this way does not involve the naming of the fill blocks at the top of the document.

Finally, should the result still not be as you expected, examine the fill file by loading it as if it were an ordinary document. Remember that the format of each record in the file must be the same and that the format must match the merge document.

SFD 1001 DISK DRIVES

Think of the SFD as half of an 8250 drive! Commodore supply the 'Disk System User Reference Guide' with the SFD 1001, but it hardly mentions the SFD! No problem if you know that an SFD is half an 8250 (the 8250 is a dual drive - rather like having two SFDs in one box). Now when reading the manual you can read about the 8250 - ignoring all references to the second drive of the 8250 (Drive 1).

The Commodore 64 uses BASIC 2.0 not 4.0. so commands like HEADER are not available. You will find that some of the commands in Appendix A are available on the Commodore 64 and some are not. This is because some have been introduced in later versions. Ignore references to DOS SUPPORT unless you have a PET/CBM 2000, 3000, 4000 & 8000 series computer.

'Two single drives do not a dual drive make'. A dual drive is one that was manufactured as such. Two independent drives connected together do not constitute a dual drive. You cannot use commands like BACKUP and COPY from one independent drive to another - these commands only work with dual drives (3040, 4040, 8050, 8250 etc.). To use two drive units together one unit must have its device number changed. This can be done in one of two ways: either permanently (by an engineer making changes on the circuit board), or temporarily (by running a program to change the device number).

To change the device number in software: Load and run the 'change address', 'change device' or 'change unit' program (the same program has several different names). You should find this program on the Test/Demo disk supplied with each drive.

Not all of the programs on the Test/Demo disk for the SFD are suitable for your computer. Because the SFD is supplied for use with several different computers, there are programs on the disk to match



all the possible computers. Please do not assume they will all work on your machine. The programs on any two Commodore Test/Demo disks may not be the same if the disks were supplied with different disk drive models.

The SFD requires double-sided double-density (DSDD) soft-sectored 80-track disks (quad density should also be acceptable). The SFD stores half the information on the second side of the disk, so single-sided disks that are OK for a 1541 are not OK with an SFD.

Do not buy cheap disks - they will give trouble in the long run. In particular do not buy disks without a hub reinforcement ring. [Super* Comer editor's note: I agree that hub rings are a good idea and should be on all disks. All 5 1/4 inch disks seem to work OK in either single or double-sided format on my 1541, 1571 and 8250 disk drives. However, others have complained that only quality disks work well in their higher density SFD 1001, 8050 and 8250 drives. My advice is that if you can afford the time to experiment then try the cheapo disks and, if they work OK, then use them; if not try, the more expensive specially checked ones. This is a part of the continuing saga of whether there is such a thing as a single-sided 5 1/4 inch disk. No person has ever claimed the free case of lager from me for being the first to prove conclusively that a 5 1/4 single-sided disk isn't just a relabeled double-sided one.]

Like the 8250, the SFD will sense the presence of an 8050 format disk. 8050 data disks are single-sided. This means that you will sometimes have to command the disk drive twice to get it to read an 8050 disk (during the first attempt to obey your command the drive senses an 8050 format and changes mode so that the second time the command works as expected).

Transfer of files to the SFD 1001 is covered in the three sections below.

1) DATABASES. Superbase data files can only be transferred by the Utility program. This program comes on the Superbase system disk. If you are using a 128 you will need to GO64 to use this program. The program requires a previously prepared (formatted) disk in the destination drive. The program must be run with only one database on the data disk. (Remember that the TRAINING database may be on the disk.) If you have more than one database on the source disk you should make a backup of it, scratch all but one database, and then run Utility on that database. The program will run with only one drive if you wish. If you are using two units remember to change the device number of one of them first!

2) SUPERBASIC PROGRAMS, HELPFILES, etc. (Anything except databases). There are several ways of transferring these files:

a) use the Utility program

b) use Unit to Unit (if appropriate for your computer)

c) use Copy/all, Copy.all, Copy all, or one of the many other variations on the original Jim Butterfield program

d) use another disk utility program of a similar type (01copy, shuttle, tcopy, etc.)

All these programs allow copies of files to be made by using the computer as a temporary storage device between reading the source disk and writing to the destination disk.

3) PROTECTED PROGRAMS. Copying protected programs is illegal. If you damage your program disk, most companies will sell you a new version at cost (Precision Software - the current price is £10.)

If it is ever necessary to change the SFD to 8050 format use the following program:

```
10 INPUT "DEVICE NUMBER",d :REM DEFAULT IS 8
20 OPEN15,D,15
30 PRINT#15,"M-W"+CHR$(172)+CHR$(16)+CHR$(1)+CHR$(1)
40 PRINT#15,"M-W"+CHR$(195)+CHR$(16)+CHR$(1)+CHR$(0)
50 PRINT#15,"U9":CLOSE15
```

The drive will then remain in 8050 format until reset.

That is enough for this issue. My fingers are about to rebel against any more keyboard activities this month. Hope to have some more from PSL in the next issue.

--oOo--

APPEAL FOR HARD OR SOFTWARE

RAFT is a centre for the unemployed in Macclesfield, sponsored by the Council for Voluntary Services, which offers retraining for the unemployed. Among the subjects they offer are basic computer literacy and word processing, and they have written to us to say they would be eternally grateful if anyone would be willing to give them unwanted hardware or software.

Anyone who wishes to help them should contact their training and placement officer, Ms TA Worsely, on Macclesfield 619413 (or write to: RAFT, Ground Floor, Cottage Street Mill, Macclesfield SK11 8HP).



# PERILS OF PORTIA, AGNUS & DAPHNE—2

by Brian Grainger

I am afraid the 'perils' of the ICPUG newsletter have cut into my Amiga playing time. A new year, lots of new members, and a delayed first newsletter mean lots of mail to answer soon after! I have had time to play a bit though and I am indebted to Brian Fowler for answering some of my problems of last time.

Let me debug Episode 1 first of all. For some reason the Editor left in my comment that creating icons was a subject not covered in the manuals with the machine. I realised later that icon creating was covered comprehensively. Second, Brian Fowler and I have resolved the problem as to whether the BASIC manual covers the PAR and PRT devices adequately. We have different issues of the BASIC manual! His did not cover it, mine did.

Brian Fowler also provided me with some printed reference notes of CLI and the Guru meditation. The latter covers four pages so I cannot reproduce here but I can point others in the direction of the Amicus disks (John Bickerstaff) for the CLI notes. Brian has also provided me with some notes on filename pattern-matching for use with CLI. As Mike Todd mentioned some time ago, the pattern-matching conventions on the Amiga are more comprehensive than in previous Commodore DOS versions. However it may be worth mentioning the following to give others a start:

? matches any single non null character
(identical to previous Commodore DOS)

#? matches any combination of characters, including nulls
(identical to '*' in previous Commodore DOS)

Last time I went to some length to explain the physical positioning of my computer equipment. Since last time I have made a further purchase to help my set-up. I use the Amiga 1081 monitor with my Amiga and 64. Trouble is, it would be convenient to be able to swivel the monitor around depending upon which computer I am using. After a careful study of various devices I came up with something called a Tilt'n'Turn/Copy holder from Misco computer supplies. For once ICPUG discounts could not help me get a more cost-effective product. Various Tilt'n'Turn devices exist but, in my position at least, the ability to have a built-in copy holder to rest your letters on while I answer them is useful. Cost is £30 plus VAT plus £5.95 p&p. Misco supply to the

trade but they do not seem to mind personal purchases. They have a good supply of other items including printer ribbons for Commodore printers but be warned that the p&p rate above is a minimum. You can get a Misco catalogue from: Misco Computer Supplies, 4, The Western Centre, Western Road, Bracknell, Berkshire. RG12 1BR. Tel. 0344-482121

Regarding transfer of files between 64 and Amiga I have had a suggestion to upload from the 64 to a suitable comms service (One to One?) and download again with the Amiga. This assumes I have a modem with my Amiga, which is not yet so. I am still looking for someone to tell me how to create a cheap null-modem with appropriate software.

In the past month or two my main preoccupations have been with looking at AmigaBASIC and playing with the 1.2 operating system (OS). The 1.2 operating system, which is standard in the new Amiga 500/2000 series, is a big improvement on the 1.1 OS. The newsletter has already mentioned many of the changes but the ability to use the whole screen for windows and the much improved disk access time are probably the most noticeable. My problem with the keyboard is also solved by OS 1.2. In the devs/keymaps directory are a whole load of keyboard options including 'gb'. A new command, 'setmap', has been added to the system directory and from CLI the gb keyboard can be incorporated by the command:

```
setmap gb
```

This ought to be possible from Workbench (it has an icon in the system drawer) but I have not worked out how to do it.

There are a few versions of OS 1.2 floating around. At the time of writing, the latest from the USA was Kickstart V.33.18 and Workbench V.33.47. The one to be officially distributed in the UK is likely to be a different version, according to rumours.

The 1.2 Extras disk, which includes the AmigaBASIC, has changed radically. The Amiga Tutorial has disappeared to make way for lots of BASIC demos and utilities. I would have thought the Tutorial was quite useful for new users but even 880K of disk space isn't enough some times.

I have found that all software released for use with OS 1.1 that I have works with OS 1.2 so upward compatibility does not appear to be a problem.

Let me finish off this time with my initial experiences with AmigaBASIC. I will say at the outset that it is a powerful version of BASIC, mimicking COMAL in many respects, BUT I find the environment



very hard to live with. COMAL users will know that its environment makes the programming development so easy. Conversely the AmigaBASIC environment makes the job so difficult. I started off fairly simply with the following program:

```
PRINT "abcd"
loop:
a$=INKEY$
IF a$="" GOTO loop
PRINT "efgh"
```

I typed the program in the LIST window, selected RUN-START from the menus and up came 'abcd' in the OUTPUT window. Thinking the program was rightly waiting for me to press a key I did so. Instead of getting the anticipated 'efgh' in the OUTPUT window all I got was the screen flash at me. Apparently an error. After trying to find an error in the program for some considerable time, I hit upon the real answer. The program was perfectly OK. What was wrong was that INKEY$ does not work unless the OUTPUT window is selected when the command is executed! This point is made in the manual, but why is an output window not selected automatically when the RUN-START option is taken? Anyway it seems odd to me that an OUTPUT WINDOW has to be selected to get an INPUT from the KEYBOARD to work!

When I first reviewed the Amiga I said I disliked the separate LIST and OUTPUT windows. Mike Todd liked it, but I would like to know of a single advantage it has. Having played with AmigaBASIC a bit now I have found another serious flaw with this approach. When I was playing with the WINDOW command and using the WINDOW function to check on the results I found I wanted to execute such direct commands as:

```
PRINT WINDOW(1)
PRINT WINDOW(2)
etc.
```

First of all you have to be in the OUTPUT window to give direct commands which is a nuisance when you are developing a program in the LIST window! Even more catastrophic is that the OUTPUT window does NOT have a screen editor so I have to type each of the lines above in full. No cursor control keys to either correct mistakes or go back to change from 1 to 2 rather than retype the line. The one thing Commodore computers had over all others that was recognised by everybody was a great screen editor. Now both the DOS system and the BASIC on the Amiga have dispensed with a considerable amount of it. This is crazy and any

potential language developers out there should not fall into this trap. I maintain what I said in Vol.8 No.3, the separate LIST window is an irritating gimmick.

I have been using the BASIC on the 1.2 Extras disk from the USA. Despite the fact that I was using OS 1.2 the BASIC still did not support the full screen size when using the WINDOW command. It seems the default setting is:

```
WINDOW 1,"BASIC",(0,0)-(618,187),31,-1
```

Any attempt to expand to 640,200 is greeted with an error. I find this more surprising as the LIST window certainly can be expanded to the full screen. I do hope this is resolved on the UK Extras disk.

One thing I have found, which I do not think is mentioned in the manual, is that direct commands can only be given on WINDOW 1 if more than one window is defined.

It seems that I have to experiment a lot more with this BASIC. I cannot say I am particularly happy with it at present.

That is it for this time. I still have to try exchanging information between ANALYSE and SCRIBBLE. In addition, I want to try out a couple of utilities, MYCLI which is another DOS system which has lots of similarities to MSDOS and TIMESET, a utility which allows you to set date and time on startup.

--oOo--

## REVIEW - TASWORD 64

by Brian Foster

Over the last couple of years I have seen various word-processing packages for the Commodore 64 mentioned in the ICPUG Newsletter, but the one thing none of these provides is a real what-you-see-is-what-you-get display. I personally find this business of scrolling the 40-column display from left to right somewhat frustrating. I am therefore surprised that (as far as I know) no one has mentioned Tasword 64.

This word processor program includes an 80-column display without the need for any additional hardware. The display is quite clear on my 14-year-old black-and-white TV and should therefore be good on a monitor, although those rich enough to afford colour TVs may find it hard to read. The display is similar to that with the 80-column program in the ICPUG software library, but Tasword seems to scroll faster.



Another very useful feature is the extent to which the user can customise the program to his/her own requirements and tastes. This doesn't just include printer codes and so on but also text, background and border colour, even down to being able to rewrite one of the "help" screens! You just make the changes you want and then save your customised version to tape or disc, so that each time you load it, it is set up for your printer, page layout and so on. Incidentally, Tasword 64 comes with codes set-up for the Epson FX-80 and CBM MPS801 but can be changed to work with a variety of serial and Centronics printers. As well as defining printer codes for different typefaces etc., you can redefine normal characters with a series of up to four codes so that, for instance, I have redefined the £ sign to print correctly on my Epson printer which otherwise prints it as a backslash. Defining extra characters with accents for foreign languages is also quite straightforward.

Tasword includes the main features that you would expect to find in a wordprocessor - block move, copy and delete; find and replace; merging of files; justification. Text files can be up to 25,000 characters. Three 'help' screens are available by pressing function key 3, and these give a summary of the commands and their purpose, including customised ones.

Files are saved as PRG rather than SEQ files but an attempt to read them using EasyScript shows that all you need to produce an Easyscript-compatible SEQ file is a short COMAL (or BASIC if you must!) program to convert the character codes.

Just a few niggles. Some commands have rather odd mnemonics - why, for instance use CTRL-C to delete when CTRL-D would be easier to memorise? CTRL-D is allocated to 'set right margin'. I'm sure with a bit more thought many of them could have been more meaningful. Also you can only define blocks of complete lines for block move or copy, though you can overcome this by using CTRL-I to chop lines up as necessary.

The manual is clear and concise, but - like many others - it would benefit from an index, although to be fair it does have a detailed contents list. It is backed up by a comprehensive tutorial in the form of a text file you can load to try out the various commands.

I like this package because it includes all the features required for basic wordprocessing; is easy to use; gives a what-you-see-is-what-you-get display; and is very easy to customise.

Tasword 64 is produced by Tasman Software Ltd., Springfield House, Hyde Terrace,Leeds LS2 9LN. Price - cassette £17.95, disc £19.95.

--oOo--

# ICPUG HELP REGISTER

This is the promised register of those ICPUG members in a position to offer help and advice to members on a variety of subjects. It is not as well presented as I would have liked since the Post Office succeded in losing the original lists and the following pages had to be reconstituted in haste.

Of the 300 or so members who completed the questionnaire, about 40 names are included on the list - some appear more than once. To use the list, decide on the area that you have your problem, look for someone listed who has your machine and contact them. When making contact, there are a few VERY important ground rules that must be followed and these are as follows:

ALWAYS include a stamped and addressed envelope with a written query. A query without a stamped and addressed envelope can be quite fairly thrown straight into the bin!

ALWAYS observe telephone time limits. It's only common sense after all. Ignore them at your peril!

ALWAYS be prepared for a delay in a reply. The person you wrote to is a volunteer and may be very busy, on holiday or simply not able to deal with it right away. 3-4 weeks is a reasonable limit.

NEVER ask someone to phone you back unless you are prepared to accept a reverse charge call.

Stick to these rules, and the system should work well - ignore them, and people will simply refuse to volunteer to help.

The following 3 pages contain the lists - columns are arranged as follows:

CATEGORY - this is the broad area of expertise
MACHINES - coded list (see below) showing machines available
NAME - name of the person, followed by the ADDRESS
PHONE - the phone number followed by the TIMES available
PRESTEL - the Prestel SYSTEL where appropriate
COMPUNET - the Compunet ID where appropriate
NOTES - additional detail on specific areas of expertise

The machine codes are as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 - PET 2000 | 4 - PET 3000/4000 | 8 - PET 8000 |
| 9 - PET 9000 (MMF) | 7 - 700 series | V - VIC-20 |
| 6 - C64 | 1 - C128/C128D | + - PLUS-4 |
| C - C16 | P - PC10/20 | A - Amiga |

Finally, this is a preliminary attempt to set up a register of this sort and feedback would be welcomed from both sides. Any ideas for improving the system would be valuable - I would hope that the ICPUG membership form would provide a regular opportunity for keeping this lists up to date.

I have made a start with this scheme - if anyone would like to take on the job of keeping it going, I'd be pleased to hear from them! In the meantime would all ICPUG members note that I can no longer handle queries myself, but will pass on those sent in my direction.

Mike Todd - March '87
27 Nursery Gardens, Welwyn Garden City, HERTS AL7 1SF



| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Accountancy | -----61---- | Andrew Silverstein | - 19 Alma House, Nightingale Est, London E5 8TR | - 01 986 4193 | : 1900+ | | | |
| Accountancy | --8---6----- | C. B. Pearson | - Rushton House, Nantwich Rd, Audley, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 8DL | - | : | | | |
| Accountancy | -4---V61---- | David Rees | - 59 Chauncy House, Stevenage, Herts | - 0438 726359 | : 1900-2300 | | | |
| Accountancy | --8---------- | John F. Ryan | - 33 Grange Park Rd, Manchester M9 2AF | - 061682 8554 | : 1000-1700 | | | |
| Accountancy | -------1---- | Mark Hayhurst | - 190 Hershaw Rd, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5GB | - 0932 245349 | : all | 932245349 | MSH1 | |
| Accountancy | --8------C-A | Michael Clarke | - 27 Giles Coppice, London SE19 1XF | - 01 670 9170 | : eves & w/e | | | |
| Applications | ----------P- | Dr. K. Humphrey | - 40 The Street, West Hougham, Nr. Dover, KENT CT15 7AZ | - 0304 206239 | : eves & w/e | | | TUTSIM dynamic sim |
| Applications | --8--V61+C-A | Ian Bennett | - 14 Pantheon Rd, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2NS | - 04215 3103 | : 1700-2200 | | | Word Processing |
| Applications | -4---V6------ | Joseph Reardon | - 15 Brightwell, Reabrook, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 7TQ | - 0743 68000 | : eves & w/e | 074368000 | | Data handling/stats |
| Basic | 2---------- | A. L. Minter | - 2 Whitefriars Way, Sandwich, Kent CT13 9AD | - 0304 617209 | : 1800-2230 | | | |
| Basic | 248------- | Bavin Clarke | - Uplands, Pwll Rd, Burryport, Dyfed SA16 0TD | - 05546 2680 | : | | | |
| Basic | ----V61-C-A | Chris Durham | - 8 Dairy Field, Salisbury Rd, Blandford Forum, Dorset | - | : | | CJD1 | |
| Basic | -4------1---- | Dave Viner | - 46 Albany Rd, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 1EE | - 0603 401652 | : 1800+ | | | |
| Basic | ----------A | David Priestley | - 31 Hamfield, Wantage, Oxon OX12 9EW | - | : | | DP22 | |
| Basic | --8--V61+C-A | Hugh Allan Jnr | - Ness Castle, Dores Rd, Inverness, | - 0463 237744 | : | | | |
| Basic | ------6----- | Ian Bennett | - 14 Pantheon Rd, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2NS | - 04215 3103 | : 1700-2200 | | | 1520 plotter advice |
| Basic | --8-7-6----- | J. Bentley | - 38 Conway Rd, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 0LD | - 06286 65932 | : 1900-2100 | | | |
| Basic | -4------6----- | Joe Griffin | - Clovelly, Lynwick St, Rudgwick, Horsham, Sussex RH12 3DJ | - | : | | | |
| Basic | ------6----- | Joel Crisp | - 7 Eastwood Rd, The Mount, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 8YJ | - 0743 58066 | : 1700-2000 | 019995499 | | UPC1 cartridge |
| Basic | ------6----- | John V. Keogh | - 30 Highwood Ave, North Finchley, London N12 8BP | - | : | | JVK2 | |
| Basic | -------1--A | Kevin Gray | - 195 Newton Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs | - 0283 46272 | : eves & w/e | | | System Design |
| Basic | -------1---- | Mark Hayhurst | - 190 Hershaw Rd, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5GB | - 0932 245349 | : all | 932245349 | MSH1 | |
| Basic | ------6----- | R.N.G. Warburton | - 124 Oaklands Ave, Oxhey, Watford, Herts WD1 4LQ | - 0923 34800 | : 1800+ | | | |
| Basic | -----61----- | S.J. Brown | - 51 Lower Dunstead Rd, Langley Mill, Notts NG16 4DN | - 0773 713955 | : 0900-2000 | | SJB2 | |
| Basic | -------1---- | Tim Raynor | - 16 Beechey Close, Copthorne, Nr. Crawley, Sussex RH10 3LS | - | : | | | |
| Basic | -------1---- | Tony Harrison-Smith | - 150 Moreland Ave, Benfleet Essex SS7 4JW | - | : | | THS1 | |
| Business | 2---------- | A. L. Minter | - 2 Whitefriars Way, Sandwich, Kent CT13 9AD | - 0304 617209 | : 1800-2230 | | | DELTA |
| Business | -----61----- | Andrew Silverstein | - 19 Alma House, Nightingale Est, London E5 8TR | - 01 986 4193 | : 1900+ | | | Word Processors |
| Business | ------6----- | Brian Jones | - 53 Beechwood Ave, Woodley, Reading, Berks RG5 3DF | - 0734 661494 | : 2000+ | | | Expert Systems |
| Business | --8---6----- | C. B. Pearson | - Rushton House, Nantwich Rd, Audley, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 8DL | - | : | | | |
| Business | -4---V61---- | David Rees | - 59 Chauncy House, Stevenage, Herts | - 0438 726359 | : 1900-2300 | | | |
| Business | -48--V61---A | Jim Kennedy | - 57 Gunnersbury Ave, Ealing, London W5 4LP | - 01 993 2634 | : 1000-2000 | 019932634 | JMK1 | |
| Business | --8---------- | John F. Ryan | - 33 Grange Park Rd, Manchester M9 2AF | - 061682 8554 | : 1000-1700 | | | BusiCalc & PAYE etc. |
| Business | -48------1---- | M. J. Valentine | - | - 0709 893995 | : | | | |
| Business | -------1---- | Mark Hayhurst | - 190 Hershaw Rd, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5GB | - 0932 245349 | : all | 932245349 | MSH1 | |
| Business | --8------C-A | Michael Clarke | - 27 Giles Coppice, London SE19 1XF | - 01 670 9170 | : eves & w/e | | | Typesetting |
| Business | --8---6----- | Morris C. Baldry | - 10 Selby St, Lowestoft NR32 2BE | - 0502 3588 | : 1900+ xSun | | | |
| Business | ------61---- | Stephen J. Reed | - 7 Netley Close, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants SO5 3PN | - | : | | | |
| Business | -4---------- | Trevor Livesey | - 50A South View Rd, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5ND | - 0268 755420 | : 1800+ | 011110167 | | Photo Typesetting |
| C | -------1---- | David Clarke | - 8 Liverpool Rd, Ronkswood Estate, Worcester WR5 1BW | - | : | | DC14 | MultiPlan |
| C | -------1---- | Mark Hayhurst | - 190 Hershaw Rd, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5GB | - 0932 245349 | : all | 932245349 | MSH1 | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| COMAL | ------6----A | Brian Grainger | - 73 Minehead Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2HZ | - 0438 727925 | : 1800-2200 | 438727925 BRIAN | | | |
| COMAL | --8-7-6----- | Joe Griffin | - Clovelly, Lynwick St, Rudgwick, Horsham, Sussex RH12 3DJ | - | : | 019995499 | | | |
| COMAL | ------6---P- | Peter Crowder | - 27 Crawford Drive, Liverpool L15 8AE | - 051722 0213 | : eves & w/e | | | | |
| Communications | -----V-1+--- | Bill Crooks | - 74 Pretoria Rd, London E11 4BD | - 01 539 2776 | : eves & w/e | | | | BT LANS V24 etc |
| Communications | -----61---A | Bill Gardner | - 156 Henwood Rd, Compton, Wolverhampton, WMids WV6 8PA | - | : | | RV1 | | Bulletin Board |
| Communications | ------6----A | Brian Grainger | - 73 Minehead Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2HZ | - 0438 727925 | : 1800-2200 | 438727925 BRIAN | | | |
| Communications | ------6----- | D. Robson | - 22 Douglas Close, Stanmore, Middx HA7 3SP | - 01 954 7887 | : 1800-2300 | | DR3 | | |
| Communications | ------6----- | Gordon Wells | - | - 01 429 0734 | : eves & w/e | | | | T.GOLD 72:MAG60062 |
| Communications | ----------A | Hugh Allan Jnr | - Ness Castle, Dores Rd, Inverness, | - 0463 237744 | : | | | | own Bul Brd |
| Communications | --8--V61+C-A | Ian Bennett | - 14 Pantheon Rd, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2NS | - 04215 3103 | : 1700-2200 | | | | Amateur Radio/Packet |
| Communications | -48----1---- | M. J. Valentine | - | - 0709 893995 | : | | | | Amateur Radio |
| Communications | --8---6----- | Morris C. Baldry | - 10 Selby St, Lowestoft NR32 2BE | - 0502 3588 | : 1900+ xSun | | | | Amateur Radio/RS232 |
| Communications | ------6----- | N. G. Wilson | - 36 Southgate Rd, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5DZ | - | : | 919994188 | | | OEL/Mustang |
| Communications | -------1---- | Percy Ford | - 46 Martin Drive, Chaddesden, Derby DE2 4NN | - 0332 674591 | : 1900+ | 332674591 EWING | | | |
| Communications | -----V-1---- | Richard C. Wilson | - Aerial House, Anston Close, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 4AQ | - | : | 019977102 | | | |
| Communications | ------61---- | Stephen J. Reed | - 7 Netley Close, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants SO5 3PN | - | : | 011110167 | | | Amateur Radio |
| Disk | ------6----- | John P. Marchant | - 43 Bowhill, Putnoe, Bedford MK41 8EQ | - 0234 61445 | : 2000+ | | | | Enhancer 2000 drive |
| Disk | ------61+--- | Tim Raynor | - 16 Beechey Close, Copthorne, Nr. Crawley, Sussex RH10 3LS | - | : | | | | Programming 1541 |
| FORTH | -------1---- | David Priestley | - 31 Hamfield, Wantage, Oxon OX12 9EQ | - | : | | DP22 | | |
| FORTH | -----V--+--- | Richard Hunt | - 45 Cumberland Rd, Bromley KENT BR2 0PL | - 01 464 6432 | : 1900-2100 | | | | |
| FORTH | --8---6----- | Ron Geere | - 86 Paddock Rd, Soouth Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QR | - | : | | RD687 | | |
| Fortran | ----------P- | Dr. K. Humphrey | - 40 The Street, West Hougham, Nr. Dover, KENT CT15 7AZ | - 0304 206239 | : eves & w/e | | | | RM Fortran on PC10 |
| Graphics | -4---V61---- | David Rees | - 59 Chauncy House, Stevenage, Herts | - 0438 726359 | : 1900-2300 | | | | Grafpad for 64/128 |
| Graphics | ----------A | Hugh Allan Jnr | - Ness Castle, Dores Rd, Inverness, | - 0463 237744 | : | | | | |
| Graphics | --8---6----- | Ron Geere | - 86 Paddock Rd, Soouth Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QR | - | : | | RD687 | | |
| Graphics | ------61+--- | Tim Raynor | - 16 Beechey Close, Copthorne, Nr. Crawley, Sussex RH10 3LS | - | : | | | | |
| Hardware | ------6-+C-- | Andy Sochanik | - 12 Cloverlea Rd, Warmley, Bristol | - | : | | | | C16/+4 upgrade |
| Interfacing | ------6-+C-- | Andy Sochanik | - 12 Cloverlea Rd, Warmley, Bristol | - | : | | | | |
| Interfacing | 248--------- | Bavin Clarke | - Uplands, Pwll Rd, Burryport, Dyfed SA16 0TD | - 05546 2680 | : | | | | |
| Interfacing | -----V-1+--- | Bill Crooks | - 74 Pretoria Rd, London E11 4BD | - 01 539 2776 | : eves & w/e | | | | BT LANS V24 etc |
| Interfacing | -------1--P- | Brian Cutts | - 12 Cedar Close, Meopham, Kent DA13 ED | - 0474 812523 | : | | | | |
| Interfacing | -----V61-C-A | Chris Durham | - 8 Dairy Field, Salisbury Rd, Blandford Forum, Dorset | - | : | | CJD1 | | video digitisers |
| Interfacing | ------6----- | D. Robson | - 22 Douglas Close, Stanmore, Middx HA7 3SP | - 01 954 7887 | : 1800-2300 | | DR3 | | |
| Interfacing | ----------A | David Jones | - 4 Mintlan Park, West Ferry, Dundee DD5 1RD | - 0382 74559 | : 1400-2200 | | | | |
| Interfacing | -------1---- | David Priestley | - 31 Hamfield, Wantage, Oxon OX12 9EQ | - | : | | DP22 | | |
| Interfacing | ------6----- | Gordon Wells | - | - 01 429 0734 | : eves & w/e | | | | T.GOLD 72:MAG60062 |
| Interfacing | --8--V61+C-A | Ian Bennett | - 14 Pantheon Rd, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2NS | - 04215 3103 | : 1700-2200 | | | | MIDI (Amiga & 64) |
| Interfacing | -48--------- | James M. Bryant | - 16 Church Rd, St. Marks, Cheltenham GL51 7AN | - | : | | | | AD conversion |
| Interfacing | -4----6----- | Joel Crisp | - 7 Eastwood Rd, The Mount, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 8YJ | - 0743 58066 | : 1700-2000 | | | | UPC1 cartridge |
| Interfacing | --8----1---A | John Bickerstaff | - 45 Brookscroft, Linton Glade, Croydon CR0 9NA | - 01 651 5436 | : 2030+ | 016515436 FJB1 | | | |
| Interfacing | -48----1---- | M. J. Valentine | - | - 0709 893995 | : | | | | Amateur Radio |
| Interfacing | --8---6----- | Morris C. Baldry | - 10 Selby St, Lowestoft NR32 2BE | - 0502 3588 | : 1900+ xSun | | | | Heating RS232 etc. |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interfacing | ------61---- | P. Hicks | - 136 Firth Park Rd, Firvale, Sheffield S5 6WP | - 0742 420550 | : eves & w/e | | PH14 | | |
| Interfacing | ------6---P- | Peter Crowder | - 27 Crawford Drive, Liverpool L15 8AE | - 051722 0213 | : eves & w/e | | | | RS232 |
| Interfacing | ----------A | Peter Sanders | - 44 Leucha Rd, Walthamstow, London E17 7LG | - 01 520 2020 | : 1900-2300 | | | | homebuilt MIDI i/f |
| Interfacing | -----V-1---- | Richard C. Wilson | - Aerial House, Anston Close, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 4AQ | - | : | 019977102 | | | RTTY Amateur Radio |
| Interfacing | --8---6----- | Ron Geere | - 86 Paddock Rd, Soouth Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QR | - | : | | RD687 | | |
| Interfacing | ------61---- | Stephen J. Reed | - 7 Netley Close, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants SO5 3PN | - | : | 011110167 | | | AmRadio - AEA CP-1 |
| Interfacing | -------1---A | Tim Arnot | - 26-28 Osborne Rd, Southsea, Hants, PO5 3LT | - 0705 750595 | : eves | 705750595 TWA1 | | | |
| Machine Code | 248--------- | Bavin Clarke | - Uplands, Pwll Rd, Burryport, Dyfed SA16 0TD | - 05546 2680 | : | | | | |
| Machine Code | ------6----A | Brian Grainger | - 73 Minehead Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2HZ | - 0438 727925 | : 1800-2200 | 438727925 BRIAN | | | |
| Machine Code | -4-----1---- | Dave Viner | - 46 Albany Rd, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 1EE | - 0603 401652 | : 1800+ | | | | |
| Machine Code | ----------A | David Jones | - 4 Mintlan Park, West Ferry, Dundee DD5 1RD | - 0382 74559 | : 1400-2200 | | | | |
| Machine Code | --8--V61+C-A | Ian Bennett | - 14 Pantheon Rd, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2NS | - 04215 3103 | : 1700-2200 | | | | |
| Machine Code | -48----1---- | M. J. Valentine | - | - 0709 893995 | : | | | | |
| Machine Code | --8---6----- | Ron Geere | - 86 Paddock Rd, Soouth Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QR | - | : | | RD687 | | |
| Machine Code | ------61---- | S.J. Brown | - 51 Lower Dunstead Rd, Langley Mill, Notts NG16 4DN | - 0773 713955 | : 0900-2000 | | SJB2 | | |
| Machine Code | -------1---A | Tim Arnot | - 26-28 Osborne Rd, Southsea, Hants, PO5 3LT | - 0705 750595 | : eves | 705750595 TWA1 | | | |
| Machine Code | ------61+--- | Tim Raynor | - 16 Beechey Close, Copthorne, Nr. Crawley, Sussex RH10 3LS | - | : | | | | |
| Modula-2 | ----------A | David Jones | - 4 Mintlan Park, West Ferry, Dundee DD5 1RD | - 0382 74559 | : 1400-2200 | | | | |
| Modula-2 | ----------A | Hugh Allan Jnr | - Ness Castle, Dores Rd, Inverness, | - 0463 237744 | : | | | | |
| PASCAL | -----V61-C-A | Chris Durham | - 8 Dairy Field, Salisbury Rd, Blandford Forum, Dorset | - | : | | CJD1 | | |
| PASCAL | -4-----1---- | Dave Viner | - 46 Albany Rd, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 1EE | - 0603 401652 | : 1800+ | | | | |
| Programming | -------1--P- | Brian Cutts | - 12 Cedar Close, Meopham, Kent DA13 ED | - 0474 812523 | : | | | | MSDOS/CPM experience |
| Projects | -48--------- | James M. Bryant | - 16 Church Rd, St. Marks, Cheltenham GL51 7AN | - | : | | | | AD conversion/speech |
| Projects | ------61---- | P. Hicks | - 136 Firth Park Rd, Firvale, Sheffield S5 6WP | - 0742 420550 | : eves & w/e | | PH14 | | RS232 i/facing |
| Servicing | -----V61+C-- | Alan Mutch | - 15 Poplar Rd, Corby, Northants NN17 2UY | - | : | | | | |
| Servicing | 248--------- | Bavin Clarke | - Uplands, Pwll Rd, Burryport, Dyfed SA16 0TD | - 05546 2680 | : | | | | |
| Servicing | ------6----- | D. Robson | - 22 Douglas Close, Stanmore, Middx HA7 3SP | - 01 954 7887 | : 1800-2300 | | DR3 | | |
| Servicing | ------61---- | Dave Hookines | - Bryn Beuno, Lon Tyn Pwll, Nefyn, Gwynedd | - 0758 721101 | : 1900-2100 | 758721101 | | | RS232 |
| Servicing | -4-----1---- | Dave Viner | - 46 Albany Rd, Norwich, Norfolk NR3 1EE | - 0603 401652 | : 1800+ | | | | PET mods |
| Servicing | --8--V61+C-A | Ian Bennett | - 14 Pantheon Rd, Chandlers Ford, Hants SO5 2NS | - 04215 3103 | : 1700-2200 | | | | |
| Servicing | --8---6----- | Morris C. Baldry | - 10 Selby St, Lowestoft NR32 2BE | - 0502 3588 | : 1900+ xSun | | | | |
| Servicing | ------61---- | P. Hicks | - 136 Firth Park Rd, Firvale, Sheffield S5 6WP | - 0742 420550 | : eves & w/e | | PH14 | | |
| Servicing | --8---6----- | Ron Geere | - 86 Paddock Rd, Soouth Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QR | - | : | | RD687 | | |
| Servicing | -------1---A | Tim Arnot | - 26-28 Osborne Rd, Southsea, Hants, PO5 3LT | - 0705 750595 | : eves | 705750595 TWA1 | | | |
| Software | --8----1---A | John Bickerstaff | - 45 Brookscroft, Linton Glade, Croydon CR0 9NA | - 01 651 5436 | : 2030+ | 016515436 FJB1 | | | what's available |
| Software | ------6----- | John V. Keogh | - 30 Highwood Ave, North Finchley, London N12 8QP | - | : | | JVK2 | | s/ware availability |
| SuperBase | -48--V61---A | Jim Kennedy | - 57 Gunnersbury Ave, Ealing, London W5 4LP | - 01 993 2634 | : 1000-2000 | 019932634 JMK1 | | | |
| SuperScript | -48--------- | James M. Bryant | - 16 Church Rd, St. Marks, Cheltenham GL51 7AN | - | : | | | | |
| SuperScript | -48--V61---A | Jim Kennedy | - 57 Gunnersbury Ave, Ealing, London W5 4LP | - 01 993 2634 | : 1000-2000 | 019932634 JMK1 | | | |
| SuperScript | -------1---- | P. E. Laffar | - 4 Tetuan Rd, Leicester | - 0533 536975 | : 1830+ | | PEL1 | | |

# COMAL CORNER

by Brian Grainger

After a period of quiet, things are beginning to hot up again in the COMAL world. I always forget that each new year brings new members to ICPUG and new people who have yet to try out COMAL. After the delay in issue of the first newsletter of the new year you must all have been chomping at the bit. No sooner had I received my copy than the postman was starting to deliver packages of all shapes and sizes full of disks for copies of COMAL. The load got so great, coupled with the fact that I had to go out occasionally, that I could not always maintain my return-of-post service. Apologies for that but I am sure there are now lots of new COMALists who have seen the light and now find the 64 an easy machine to program. May I welcome you all to the fold?

Two things are very clear from the mail I received. First of all most of you did not really know what disks to ask for apart from the starter disk. This is reasonable as disk directories for the earlier disks were printed in the newsletter in previous years and you cannot be expected to get hold of them all as back issues. Consequently I have adhered to the club policy of producing a catalog disk that gives a directory listing of ALL released COMAL disks. In addition it includes a brief description of what the programs on each of the UK COMAL SIG disks do. You can request a copy of the catalogue disk from me, subject to the usual rules. Those of you who asked me to choose a disk to supply all got the UK COMAL SIG No.3 disk. I am sure I did not please everybody with this choice. Indeed it is not my own personal choice of the best first disk to have. However, it was clearly most popular with previous COMAL newcomers so I bowed to their judgement.

The other noticeable thing from your mail is that too many of you use BOTH sides of a disk to store programs. You sent two double-sided disks and expect four disk copies in return. As both myself and Joe Griffin forgot to mention that we software librarians do not like this practice as we believe it is likely to lead to disk drive faults I answered such requests. Please note for future reference, though, to supply ONE disk for each disk copy requested. What you do with the copies yourself is your own concern. I personally do not mind copying more than two disks, provided enough blanks are sent, but please try and avoid more than two at peak periods (just after a newsletter has come out)!

One final point regarding copy requests. If you must send a cheque to cover postage (I prefer IRCs or UK stamps), please make it payable to



me personally and not ICPUG. This saves me and the Treasurer time.

Last time I spent a fair amount of newsletter space describing the disk version of COMAL for the Commodore 64. Since then I have spoken to Denmark and it looks as if we have a source for the COMAL cartridge again. This seems an opportune moment to summarise sources of COMAL for other machines, about which I get asked quite often.

1) COMAL cartridge for the Commodore 64 from:

UniComal A/S, Tvaermaksvej 19, 2860 Soeborg, Denmark.
Tel +45 1 673511 Danish price 795 DKr.

Just as soon as I know a UK price I shall let you know. Until then you will have to haggle. Please let me know how you get on.

2) COMAL cartridge for the Commodore 128:

also comes from UniComal. Danish price 995 DKr.

3) Amstrad COMAL for the 464, 664, 6128 is written by:

Freddy Kristiansen, DalgaSoft APS, Agerglimt 10, 6340 Krusaa, Denmark
Tel +45 4 6735 29.
If this fails try the distributor:

Erik Karlsen, Quicksoft Ltd, Bukkegaards Alle 9-11, FRB C, Copenhagen Denmark. Tel +45 1 241233.

4) PC COMAL specifically for IBM PC comes with Danish manual only from:

Dansk Micro, Bispevej 5, DK 2400, Copenhagen NV, Denmark.
Tel +45 1 199000. Danish Price 2700 DKr.

5) MSDOS COMAL for IBM PC and compatibles comes from UniComal.
Danish Price 3500 DKr.
This version is improved on the PCDOS version by supporting the EGA, having extra commands and having English documentation. It is provided on 3 disks: A system disk, Supplementary Examples disk, Tutorial disk. Two manuals are provided: a 600-page reference manual and a 200+-page tutorial.

A separate package which fully supports RS232 communications on the PC is also available from UniComal. Price not known.

Note: UniComal is seeking a commercially minded UK distributor. If you know anyone who might be interested, tell them to contact UniComal.

Apart from all the above the news for the future is very exciting. Both Denmark and IBM are keeping very quiet about what is to happen about IBM COMAL. Reading between the lines, however, I do not believe this means IBM are dropping it. On the contrary, I think something is afoot. It is just taking a while to be ready for launch. This is the way IBM work. I may be putting two and two together and making five but there are very strong rumours that the next IBM offering is to be a low-end PC for the Educational market, dubbed the PC ET (Educational Technology). I wonder if the announcement of COMAL for IBM world-wide will be made at the launch of the ET. I should point out that this is being written mid-March and it is expected some announcement may be made at the beginning of April so I may be proved right or wrong by the time you read this.

One fly in the ointment is a company called Mytech. It would appear they have lost out in the battle to supply IBM with COMAL and in response they are trying to market their version at a much cheaper price. The US seems to be very enamoured with this at the moment (a price of less than $100 has been suggested). However, Dick Klingens of the Dutch COMAL Users Group confirms my suspicions that it is not a good version and does not conform to the COMAL standard in some respects. As Mytech may well produce a version for the Macintosh and Amiga this does not augur well for compatibility. Let us hope they can improve their product.

UniComal are not standing still either. Promised soon is a COMAL compiler for MSDOS. In fact it has already been used to produce some of the programs on the MSDOS COMAL systems disk. This will mean you can develop programs with the interpreter and, when complete, compile them for protection and more speed. I understand compiled programs will be stand-alone and will not need any special COMAL disks to run. This means third-party software could be produced in COMAL.

Finally, Dick Klingens tells me he has been beta-testing a CP/M COMAL from a Danish company. It conforms to the standard and looks very promising. It may also have a compiler, but I am not sure about this.

All this news sounds pretty exciting to me and it looks as if COMAL Comer will have plenty to say for a good while yet!

I shall finish this time as I always try to do with a useful routine in COMAL. The routine will work in COMAL 0.14 or 2.01 and comes from Joel Rea and was published in COMAL TODAY. The procedure tumto(x,y) will set the turtle's heading to point to a specified co-ordinate (x,y) and tum the turtle image accordingly. It says the procedure could be



useful for 'vanishing point perspective work'. I am sure it is, but I do not know what that is!

```
FUNC deg(r) CLOSED
  RETURN 57.2957795*r
ENDFUNC deg
//
FUNC rad(d) CLOSED
  RETURN .017453295*d
ENDFUNC rad
//
FUNC rho(x,y) CLOSED
  IF ABS(x)<1e-08 THEN RETURN PI*(y<0)
  IF ABS(y)<1e-08 THEN RETURN PI/2*SGN(x)
  IF y<0 THEN RETURN (PI/2+ATN(-y/x))-PI*(x<0)
  RETURN ATN(x/y)
ENDFUNC rho
//
FUNC theta(x,y) CLOSED
  RETURN SQR(x*x+y*y)
ENDFUNC theta
//
PROC tumto(x,y)
  setheading(deg(rho(x-xcor,y-ycor)))
ENDPROC tumto
```

Here is an example of its use in COMAL 2.01

```
USE turtle
graphicscreen(0); window(-1,1,-1,1); hideturtle
FOR i:=-1 TO 1.05 STEP .1 DO
  moveto(i,-1); tumto(0,0); forward(theta(i,-1)*.75)
  moveto(i,1); tumto(0,0); forward(theta(i,1)*.75)
  moveto(-1,i); tumto(0,0); forward(theta(-1,i)*.75)
  moveto(1,i); tumto(0,0); forward(theta(1,i)*.75)
ENDFOR i
penup; home; showturtle
REPEAT UNTIL KEY$>""0""
```

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## REVIEW—TURBO-ROM

by Tim Raynor

[Editors' Note: This review is of Turbo Rom by Cockroach Software: a similarly named product by Datel Electronics was reviewed in the Sept/Oct 1986 Newsletter, page 442.]

The Turbo-Rom arrives in a small plastic box with some photocopied instructions. To install the ROM is quite an easy job if you are not afraid to dismantle your computer. The C128 is a bit of a pain, having a large metal screening plate, which is also used as a heat sink. The installation instructions are quite good, although some fairly drastic metal work is required to allow the screening plate to go back after the ROM has been fitted, i.e. a hole has to be cut out of it. I didn't do this myself! The other problem with fitting was that it requires a small wire to be pushed into one of the holes on the chip socket, which I found difficult to do and I wonder how long it would stay in place. To fit the chip in the C128D is more complicated, and I think better instructions should be given than 'remove the power supply, disk drive, disk controller board, etc.'

Once fitted correctly, you can boot up into 64 mode. My first shock came when I saw the colours: I don't know who chose them but I personally prefer the original colours, which isn't saying much. The main aim of the chip is to provide fast loading and saving to disk, which it does fairly well. I managed to get a speed increase of about five times loading. The kernal also gives the ability to miss out the ',8' at the end of the load command, which is handy.

Cockroach have added a small DOS support, with the usual disk commands, directory etc. A few extras have been added like '@P' which is equivalent to OPEN4,4:CMD4 and '@O' which tums the printer off. Also included is '@F' which provides fast disk formatting. Another useful feature is '@9', to tum a device 8 drive into a device 9 drive, if you have two drives.

A couple of extra commands have been added to BASIC:

OLD - Recovers a program after a NEW
ZAP - Same as SYS64738
MON - Call a monitor
* - LOAD":*",8,1



Shift/RunStop now prints LOAD with several cursor rights and ',8,1', to be used in conjunction with the directory routine, the idea being to cursor up onto the line that contains the file you want to load, after first performing a directory, and type shift/RunStop and press retum to load the file. Unfortunately, this does not work on the top line of the screen! Lastly, there is a simple low resolution screen dump. I wasn't able to try this as it only works with a serial printer which I didnot have access to at the time of the review. It is accessed by typing CBM + F7.

I found the Turbo-Rom quite powerful. It is reasonably compatible with existing software although if any software doesn't work correctly, it can be switched out. My main criticism is that I think more thought could have been put into the implementation of some of the commands. I personally would have liked to have seen the use of the function keys. Another change I would like to make would be for the shift/RunStop key sequence to load and run the first file on disk, as it does on the PET. I was unable to try it with a 1570/1571 and as such I can't report on how it would function with these drives, as there are complications such as whether it will turbo load and save on the reverse side of the disk with a 1571.

The ROM seems to be good value for money and provides the speed that is sadly lacking in the 1541 drive but before buying it for use with a 1570/1571 I would first check that it functions correctly in all modes.

Turbo Rom is distributed by Cockroach Software at a recommended price of £19.99. Members have been offered a discounted price of £15 including P&P. To obtain the discount send your cheque or postal order, made out to Cockroach Software, to our Discounts Officer (remember also to include an 18p stamp).

--oOo--

## TRANSLATOR REQUIRED

The club has been given two disks of games for the Vic, C-64 and Plus-4/C-16 software libraries. The program instructions are in FLEMISH! Can anyone translate these into English for us? Offers please, to Joe Griffin.

# Program coding is now as easy as A,B,C...

It's not writing programs that takes the time but debugging them, every comma,bracket,reserved word has to be exactly right or it crashes! However, by selecting from a menu and answering questions that THE LAST ONE puts to you you get error free programs every time-and all this in English too! Finished programs can handle up to 13 files at the same time & can include all the features YOU want the program to have. THE LAST ONE allows anyone to write a computer program on the 64/128. The stand-alone program can be compiled with BLITZ to run faster.A version is available on the PET 8000.

THE LAST ONE is £31 incl p&p to ICPUG members
BLITZ for 64 is £19 and the 128 is £29
128PLUS is £19(allows 128 owners to run 64 progs at 2 mhz and access 1571/1570 speed
(PET version of THE LAST ONE, BLITZ and 128 PLUS also from SUPERSOFT)
C.W. SYSTEMS, 37 Cecil St, Lytham, Lancs,FY8 5NN

THE LAST ONE The Famous Original The Program that writes Programs


## ICPUG TIES

There are still some ICPUG ties remaining at £3.00 each, including postage and packaging to members anywhere in the world. The ties are in Navy with a small gold ICPUG logo in what is known as the 'under the knot' position to tie makers but centred on the front to people like myself. Send cheques made payable to ICPUG to Jim Kennedy at the address inside the front cover. Please include your name and address printed clearly on either your request or a peel-off label.

These ties, which are very good-looking, are suitable to wear for business and social occasions as well as to computer functions. We were able to secure them at this very reasonable price by bulk purchase. It was further decided to charge a single price world-wide as a gesture to our overseas members who usually have to put up with the inconvenience of international reply coupons, extra costs, delays, etc. The Committee will also consider any future items for sale based on response to this offer and any comments and recommendations received by the Chairman from members.



## REVIEW—MODULA-2

by Mike Todd

At one time, Pascal was the 'language of the Gods' - the cult language everyone who was anyone was using. It was a highly structured language with many variable types; it was (almost!) a standard across different computers and it was compiled, so it was potentially very fast.

I used Pascal for a couple of years, and I loathed it. It lacked some fundamental features, it was cumbersome to use (I was programming on a Zilog MCZ-2 system, which first of all compiled to assembler source code which itself had to be assembled and then linked) and, for the application I was working on the inability to jump out of complex nested loops (a specific feature of Pascal) meant that the programs became very untidy and far from the ideal that the concept of structured programming was trying to encourage.

Despite some of its inherent cussedness, Pascal is still a popular language - but it now has a successor. Niklaus Wirth, working at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and himself responsible for the development of Pascal, devised a successor language to overcome some of the limitations of Pascal. Its main feature was to allow a modular approach to programming, with each module being separately compiled (to allow for libraries of procedures/functions to be developed) and eventually all linked together in the final code.

So, along came Modula-2 - a language with the features of Pascal, but with many advantages. There is a richer set of variable types; multi-tasking is an inherent feature; access to machine level provided (inc. operating system routines) full type-checking across modules; and it is generally easier to work with. I can even jump out of loops!

Anyway, that's enough of the background of Modula-2: now to the TDI implementation for the AMIGA, which is available in the UK through Modula-2 Software Ltd. of Bristol. So, how about writing a very small program in Modula-2 to see how the process of compiling actually works?

Here is a very short Modula-2 program designed to print the square roots of numbers from 1 to 100. As with most compilers, it is written using any standard text editor (ED or EMACS will do, although a screen editor is supplied with the newest version of the compiler) and I prefer to do all this work in RAM - it's much faster! I simply used the command EMACS RAM:SQUAREROOT.MOD to get going.

```
MODULE  squareroot ;

FROM InOut     IMPORT   WriteLn ;
FROM RealInOut IMPORT   WriteReal ;
FROM MathLib0  IMPORT   sqrt ;

VAR number : REAL ;

BEGIN
    number := 1.0 ;

    WHILE number < 100.0 DO
        WriteReal (number , 10) ;
        WriteReal (sqrt(number) , 15) ;
        WriteLn ;
        number := number + 1.0 ;
    END ;

END squareroot.
```

The first line gives this module a name and effectively determines that this module is the master program module (modules designed to be compiled as separate modules for future inclusion in other programs would have two separate modules written - a DEFINITION module containing the function or procedure syntax definitions, and an IMPLEMENTATION module containing the code itself).

The next three lines inform the compiler that we shall be looking for the named procedures or functions held in separate modules (included with the package). The three listed here (InOut, RealInOut, and MathLib0) are standard to Modula-2, although the disk supplied contains a large selection of additional modules for accessing many of the Amiga's special features - of which more in a moment.

Then comes the program itself - a variable declaration and a simple loop using the two procedures and the one function imported earlier.

This program is held in the file SQUAREROOT.MOD (the .MOD extension designates the file as a Modula-2 source code file).

Now we need to perform the initial compilation - the process is very simple: MODULA RAM:SQUAREROOT.MOD and away it goes. The first thing the compiler does is to import what it needs from the designated files (it uses the files held in the M2: directory with the .SYM suffix -



these files will have been prepared using separate compilation of the DEFINITION modules as mentioned earlier).

The result (after 37 seconds) is an intermediate file called RAM:SQUAREROOT.LNK.

During this compilation, any errors found will be detected and written out to an error file RAM:SQUAREROOT.ERM - looking at these is a little awkward as one has to utilise a special program M2ERROR to examine the errors. However, it isn't all that difficult, and I believe that the latest version has a neater approach through the screen editor supplied, which is integrated with the compiler and error reporter.

For those wanting to be more adventurous in their compilation, extra options are available. For instance a .LST file can be created with line and depth numbering and there are special compiler options which affect the object code (including stack checking and range checking on array subscripts etc.).

This intermediate file has your own code included, with appropriate links for the imported routines (although their code has not, at this stage, been included in the program).

At this point, those with the developer's package can examine the .LNK file using one of a series of utilities to decode its contents. This gives details of the code to be imported, data segments and finally disassembles the intermediate machine code.

From this intermediate code, the final load module is generated using the linker, which is invoked by LINK RAM:SQUAREROOT.LNK.

The linker will now go to the .LNK modules of the imported files (which would have been generated previously by separately compiling their IMPLEMENTATION modules - this is already done for the libraries and Amiga interface modules).

The result is a final LOAD module which can be invoked quite simply by typing the program name (in our case RAM:SQUAREROOT).

Linker options include MAP (which produces a .MAP file containing all sorts of information about the various modules, including those that were imported) and a special OPT option to invoke an optimisation pass which will remove all unreferenced procedures.

After just over a minute, our example program was linked and ready to execute - the final code produced was 14304 bytes long. However, using OPT, the final code was only 4984 bytes long.

One significant feature of this package is that, if a specified file is not found for any reason, a prompt is issued and you can specify an

alternative. This may not seem very useful, but it does allow you to place some of the .LNK files in RAM: for instance. The linker won't find them (because it always looks in the M2: directory) but they can be re-specified at the prompt with the RAM: prefix.

Well, that's the procedure - it's fairly easy to get used to and the advantages of the language outweigh some of the awkwardness that one may experience. I certainly found the procedure rather daunting as the manual is rather poor is explaining what is going on - indeed, the special developer's options were totally undocumented!

However, with a good reference book by your side you should find few problems.

One thing I've not mentioned yet is the interfacing of this version to the Amiga's powerful operating system software - there are no two ways about it, it is not easy! The authors have provided a whole range of modules allowing access to the Amiga libraries, but these require quite involved knowledge of the use of the these routines. This information can only be gleaned from the Amiga ROM Kernel Manuals and INTUITION reference manual (expensive!) and it is not an undertaking to be recommended to the faint-hearted.

With a modular language, it is tragic that this interface is not made easier to use and I would have liked to have seen a set of procedures/functions that gave one straightforward access to such things as creating a screen or window, setting up menu strips, even simple graphics commands. The syntax of these could be much the same as those used within AmigaBASIC as they are adequate for all but the most advanced user. Maybe some enterprising ICPUG member could come up with some of these routines for the library?

Returning to the packages, there are three distinct packages available. The bottom level (at £99.95) is the standard package which contains the screen editor, compiler, linker and library/interface files and comes on a single disk. The two-disk Developer's package (£149.95) includes all the definition modulae sources, utilities for decoding source, link and load files, a Kermit file transfer utility, source code to several Amiga modules and a cross-referencer. There is also a Commercial package (£299.95) which I have not investigated.

Of the entire package, my main criticism is of the user's manual which is really very skimpy indeed (even though it runs to 400 pages!). The bulk of this is appendix D which contains the listings of all the



definition modules of the libraries and Amiga interface modules. These are vital since they contain the syntax of all the various procedures and functions - there is an index to these also provided to avoid the need for constantly thumbing through the book!

The actual guide to the compiler/linker is contained in only 50 pages, and I felt it lacked any sympathy for the beginner in the language. It assumed a great deal of knowledge of Modula-2. Now I accept that a user's manual shouldn't have to be written as a tutorial or a teaching instrument - but it should be written sympathetically.

Having said that, with a good Modula-2 reference book by one's side, the manual is adequate once the first principles have been mastered.

The implementation of the compiler is also adequate, and produces fairly compact code (the newest version is up to a third more efficient) but there is one glaring ommission.

The Modula-2 standard includes support for concurrent processes and communication between them. This includes procedures to start a separate process and pass signals back and forth - all these held in the standard module called 'processes'. The Amiga environment is ideally suited to this level of programming - but this compiler does not include this standard module!

The SYSTEM module (which contains a variety of system level definitions) does at least include the NEWPROCESS procedure and the related procedures for passing control between processes - but the really useful module is missing. Several attempts to make this point to both TDI in the US, and the UK company have failed to produce a satisfactory response other than a comment that the Amiga interface modules will allow one to do this directly at system level. To my mind that is unreasonable as this feature is part of the standard repertoire quoted by all the reference books that I have at my disposal.

I have to say that I do like Modula-2. It is versatile and powerful and not too difficult to come to terms with (albeit with some previous experience of Pascal). For major programming projects, its ease of use and modular approach make it preferable to the only other 'standard' Amiga language 'C'.

I've not attempted any major programs myself, although there are several good examples around. For instance, the program that draws the three-dimensional rotating blue cube that moves backwards and forwards was written in Modula-2, and its source code is included in the user's manual as an example of how to access the Amiga interface modules.

The version I examined was an early developer's compiler, and since then a newer version has been released. An advertisement for this new version appeared on page 26 of the Jan/Feb newsletter. It was intended to coincide with this review, but as I was unable to get satisfactory answers fom the company on a series of technical questions (including the lack of the PROCESS module) the review had to be delayed.

This newer version has all the necessary support for version 1.2 of the operating system; includes a full screen text editor interfaced to the compiler and error reporter to make life very much easier; is faster and smaller; includes support for LONGREAL variables (giving extra precision); and includes the new Commercial version.

Modula-2 Software are now at PO Box 393, Bristol BS99 7WU - they seem to have moved since January!

Finally, there are several books available on Modula-2. The following is a brief summary:

Programming in Modula-2 by Prof. N. Wirth
Published by Springer Verlag. ISBN - 0 387 12206 0
This is the 'standard' reference for the language. It is written as such, and is of little use as a learning aid, but is a valuable source of reference.

Modula-2 Discipline & Design by Arthur Sale
Price £13.95. Published by Addison Wesley. ISBN - 0 201 12921 3
A readable textbook on the language but inclined to be highly technical at times.

Modula-2 An Introduction by Daniel Thalmann
Published by Springer-Verlag. ISBN - 3 540 13297 X
Another in textbook style - many example programs makes it the most useful reference book I have found, although its lack of a decent index is very frustrating.

Modula-2: Constructive Program Development by P. Messer & I. Marshall
Price £14.95. Published by Blackwell Scientific. ISBN - 0 632 01508 X
Perhaps the best introduction I have found. Easy to read and well illustrated with examples. Has a good index too!

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# REVIEW—DIMENSION'S 64/128 PRINTER BUFFER

by Jim Kennedy

A printer buffer is one of those items which, once used, becomes indispensable. Those who have used one will undoubtedly agree and pass on to the next article; for those who have not, I'll explain. When printing anything more than a few lines of text the printer's speed becomes the bottleneck that prevents one from getting the computer's cursor back and doing something else. With a three-page letter you either sit there for what seems an eternity waiting for the last page to come out or go downstairs and make a cuppa. But a printer buffer takes the computer output at the fastest rate your computer is capable of, stores the output in RAM and sends it to the printer as required. Meanwhile the computer thinks the printing has finished and returns the cursor allowing you to start writing your next letter, editing another program or doing something else useful. And, if you are logged on to a network and wish to print out a screen or mailbox the dumping of the print output to a buffer means one doesn't waste on-line time which equals money.

The problem with using currently available printer buffers for most Commodore computers is that Commodore printers use the CBM serial bus instead of something like a Centronics connection. This has meant that no suitable Commodore serial-bus printer buffers were sold in this country. But that has now changed. Dimension Computers Ltd of Leicester now stock a CBM serial-bus-compatible printer buffer made by Wiesemann & Theis GMBH of Germany and imported through FCC Ltd. Two models are available, 32K and 64K. They work with both C64 and C128 models and come in a small black box. This box has input and output serial-bus connections along with a cable which is attached to the cassette port to provide the 5 volts required to power the device. If you cannot use a cassette port, the instruction sheet (printed in English, German and French) indicates that the buffer can be plugged into a separate 5-volt +/- 5% power supply. However, I suggest you first ring Dimension Computers on Leicester (0533) 517479 and check the availability of this separate power supply in this country if you require one (i.e. for the SX64).

Using the buffer is very easy; plug it in to the system and start printing. In use I found it to be completely transparent. It is set up as device 4 but one may flip two DIP switches inside the box to change it to device 5, 6 or 7. (In case you have ever wondered what DIP stands

for, it means Dual-in-line Package so named because of its two parallel rows of leads which connect to the circuit board.) I have tested the buffer with Superbase, Superscript, Vizastar, Vizawrite, BASIC, Perint Shop (tested in banner print mode) and the Commodore (Compunet) modem. All worked properly.

A sample time to dump and regain the cursor with a Superscript text file of 54 blocks and approximately 13,500 characters was 22 seconds. The same file actually took 13 minutes to print its four pages on my DPS 1101 daisywheel printer. A similar-length Vizawrite file took 44 seconds to dump when printed in ragged-right-margin mode and 60 seconds in justified mode, again with a printing time of 13 minutes. These slightly slower dump times reflect the way Vizawrite scrolls the monitor screen while simultaneously outputting to the printer.

One can do a lot of editing in the 12-minute time saving while printing a four-page document. Using Print Shop in C64 mode, it took me 1 minute to dump the banner to the buffer and regain the the menu compared to 12 minutes to print the actual banner. If you do much printing with a C64 or C128 computer, especially in business, then you really cannot afford to be without one of these printer buffers. The price is £69.95 for the 32K and £89.95 for the 64K model, but they pay for themselves.

I got the 32K version, used it for a while, opened it up, saw the empty RAM chip socket, looked at the schematic wiring diagram that came with the buffer and concluded that the purchase and insertion of an extra RAM chip should probably expand it to 64K. Purchase of a 41256 Dynamic RAM chip (150 nanosecond version to match its existing mate in the buffer) from Technomatic on Edgware Road in London solved the problem. If you feel confident about inserting a RAM chip into its socket then the 32K version with DIY upgrade is possibly the better buy. But, and this is an important but, if you do not know about these things be aware that you can damage chips in many ways - through static electricity, bent or broken pins, chip in backwards, etc. - and you may be better off purchasing the 64K model straight away. Chips are very sensitive to static electricity; that is why they are sold and shipped in special containers or with their legs in aluminium foil over polystyrene foam base. So if anyone ruins a chip by not knowing what they are doing, please don't blame me.

I actually debated long and hard before even mentioning the 32K RAM DIY upgrade in this article. However, since the instructions furnished with the buffer cover opening the case to set the DIP switches for device numbers higher than 4 and since the spare RAM socket is plainly



visible to anyone without a white cane I thought that this information and its associated warning is better than a lot of untrained DIY'ers mucking things up because a friend said 'all you need do is plug in a RAM chip'.

It may be of interest that almost always when inserting a RAM, ROM or EPROM chip I bend their legs inwards a bit; the only times I didn't bend them usually resulted in 'one leg out of bed'. But beware! Don't proceed by bending the individual legs! All the legs on one side are bent at the same time and everything including yourself must be earthed if you don't want a duff chip at the end of things. If you don't know how, then I recommend not trying until someone who does know shows you.

I recommend this printer buffer highly. Unfortunately, no ICPUG discount is available. I understand Dimension Computers Ltd's margins on the item are quite small. Dimension apparently fought for some time to have someone import these buffers because they felt them to be so useful. I agree. I wouldn't give up mine.

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## 1520 NEWSLETTER

As very briefly mentioned in the last issue of the Newsletter (page 41) the 1520 User Group have produced a very full Newsletter of their own.

From the announcement in the first paragraph that the National 1520 User Group has been reduced to an informal group with the formal group being wound-up, one might wonder what point there is in reading on. But this is a total misconception as, like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, the remainder of the newsletter is packed with useful information and totally dispels the initial feeling that this is the end. I have rarely seen a newsletter, in fact, that showed more vitality and single-mindedness in its intention not only to survive but to do so by providing information and services that its readers need. Included is a very useful set of notes to accompany the first disk of software (see Nov/Dec Newsletter, page 547).

If you are even slightly interested in the 1520 printer/plotter then this newsletter is for you. Wal Austin and John Bentley should be very proud of their first effort. To obtain a copy, send a stamped and addressed A4 envelope to either W Austin, School of Geography, Lipman Building, Newcastle Polytechnic, Sandyford Road, Newcastle, NE1 8ST, or J Bentley, 38 Conway Road, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 0LD.

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# COMPUNET—THE TRUE FACTS

by Tim Arnot

Disturbing news has reached us in the ICPUG first-floor basement on the sunny south coast. Notably that Compunet is slow, unreliable and unuseable. So, armed only with our trusty filofax, we braved the raging blizzards and went to Compunet's headquarters above a seedy warehouse in London NW10.

As I dripped across the threshold I was greeted by the cheery face of one Graham Craigie. 'Hello', he said, 'you must be the one they warned me about. Come in.' I followed him into the gloomy depths of what appeared to be just another first-floor converted factory building filled with high-tech equipment, which it was.

While Graham was outside making some coffee, I took a quick look around. A lot of unused floor space interspaced with printers, VDU terminals, piles of modems, the odd Commodore 64 and 128 logged onto Compunet, banners propped up against the walls. In fact, it all looked a bit shabby. I felt instantly at home. Graham came back with the coffee and we started chatting.

## The past

Historically, Compunet was started by Alan Carmichael and Graham Craigie as a joint venture with Commodore. The system was set up on the DEC system 10 computer run by ADP in Great Portland Street. Compunet would provide the service, and Commodore would sell the modems and provide the publicity and marketing. Being noted for bad marketing skills, Commodore were true to form and eventually pulled out of the Compunet project.

When it was being first set up, Compunet was tested using prototype modems provided by Commodore. As soon as the system was running and the modems okayed, Commodore's Rod Wellbum took the prototypes away so that the design could be tidied up for the final production unit. What nobody realised was that this tidying up process was really just a cost reduction process that resulted in a modem containing 30% fewer components and barely capable of functioning. Commodore's Quality Control department soon followed in the wake of its marketing counterpart, and batch after batch of faulty modems were produced and shipped. Since that time, all early modems have been recalled for a vital modification. It is still possible to buy, however, a Commodore modem that has vital chips missing or is in other ways flawed. Compunet



did stress to me on more than one occasion that people who are claiming logon times in the region of 10 minutes have a faulty modem, since the system really isn't that slow. If you take a long time in logging on then phone Compunet direct and talk to them about it.

## The present

OK, now the meaty bits. Compunet runs on a DEC system 10. The system software is written in FORTRAN, with all the bits that need to go fast being written in Macro Assembler. This results in very efficient file access, and for example to access any page in the whole database of over 400 megabytes takes just a single disk access. In actual fact Compunet runs as two databases. One holds all the directory information and contains pointers into the other database, which holds the programs, texts and links.

A DEC system 17 computer is used for development purposes, and new patches to the system are tried out on a system 18 machine; it has been some six months since any major development work took place, however. Compunet themselves use terminals linked to the host via a 64 kilobit link. These terminals can be used to do all the administrative tasks as well as monitoring the system. Being a multitasking machine, the DEC 10 treats each user as a separate 'job'. The system itself has a capacity of 120 job slots, of which Compunet uses up to 78 in the evenings, although they are only allocated very few during the day. Of the 78-odd jobs used, up to 70 can be users, the remainder are taken up by the running of the network.

The software running Compunet is fast. It has been optimised over the last few years and system speed is now limited only by the late-1950s hardware it is running on. During the time I was watching the job status screen, I could see that while most users were 'active' jobs in core, about 30% of people were held in cache memory. these people would have to be pulled in an out of core storage every time they were granted CPU time. Naturally, the criteria for scheduling CPU time are fixed in favour of ADP. The installation of another 0.5 megawords core comes rather expensive and is not practical. Compunet claim that they have something like 5 or 6 problems with the DEC 10 each week.

To give you some idea of the tortuous route that data has to follow before it reaches you, here is its route from the DEC 10. First it passes through a Host Interface Processor (HIP), thence to a Terminal Interface Processor, then to a kilostream processor, from where it gets sent to your local ADP node, a modem, a fairly grotty 3.4 kilobit phone line, your modem and finally the screen. Of course, some users need to

duplicate part of that journey through the ISTEL network.

When you log on through ISTEL, you are taken by kilostream to ISTEL's site near Wembley, from where you are transferred to ADP by a 9.6Kbit link direct to ADP. This link has a maximum capacity of 32 users, although Compunet claim that only 18 to 20 ever use it at any time.

The future

Now to the bit you have all been waiting for. What of the future? I couldn't help noticing a box sitting in the comer of Graham's office. It was about the size of two IBM ATs stuck together, and it is Compunet's 'new baby'. The box essentially holds 3 68020 processors, some 68010s, an SCSI (Small Computer Systems Interface) port and a couple of 400 megabyte disk drives all linked together by something called a 'full 32 bit VME backplane'.

This 'new baby' is being used to develop a new Compunet, due to be unveiled to the world at the beginning of July. This is only a development prototype machine, and the final Compunet hardware will be much larger. It will also be far easier to expand, and faster (the one word you've all been wanting to hear!).

The rationale is to have one 68020 with half a megabyte for every 32 users on the system. There will be four of these front-end processors when the system comes on line, giving a system capacity of 128 users over the current 70. More users? - just add more front-end processors.

There will also be up to 10 'back-end' processors, running things like MUD, partyline and so on. These are also 68020-based, but can have up to 64 Megabytes of storage to each processor.

Behind all this is a 68010 driving the SCSI port to all the disk storage. This will initially be 3 or 4 units, each holding 380 Mb, but can be up to 8 units.

The advantage of using a supermicro computer like this compared with a mainframe is that there are hundreds of manufacturers making VME-based products, and they are CHEAP (ie £5000 compared with £50,000).

At around the same time as the new system is due to be installed, Compunet are planning to relocate somewhere closer to the ISTEL facility in Wembley. This prompted the question, 'If Compunet is parting company with ADP, how are users going to log on?'

There will be a certain number of access points directly into Compunet for users in the London area. A series of kilostream links to ISTEL will provide for local call access to just about anywhere else. Naturally the ISTEL link is not free (currently 90p per hour) although, since a larger proportion of Cnet's business will be using ISTEL,



better rates can probably be negotiated. Yes, this is effectively charging connect time, but some of us have to pay it already, and no, Prestel doesn't charge connect (it's the only one), but it probably will soon, and it only gets away with it anyway because of huge BT subsidies. Compunet claim that their pricing structure will remain 'in line with other similar facilities'.

Future future

What of future plans? Jane Firbank, Compunet's Editor told me that 1200-baud upload facilities outside London are a top priority, and a 1200-baud node in Southampton was proposed (this pleased me no end!). In fact Compunet could handle virtually any upload protocol, even 2400-baud full duplex, providing the modems are out there to use it.

The software is already written to allow BBC micro users to use the system, and an IBM PC/compatibles interface is 'nearly ready'. In these cases security will probably be in the form of a dongle, allowing existing modems to be used; 16-bit machines may well be catered for (Atari ST and Amiga), depending on how well the new models sell, although no definite plans have been made. You can be sure a 16-bit Cnet would feature multiple windows, pull-down menus, mice and so on. Fret not, it will still look and work the same on a 64.

As the hardware will belong to Compunet, they will be able to open up the machine during the day to business users, and many new business-oriented facilities are expected. (expect a 'the boss is coming' screen on new versions, so you don't get caught playing MUD during the day!)

Finally, don't get your hopes up that as soon as the new machine comes on-line, everything will come up roses. There are bound to be a certain number of, er, xenomorphs lurking around the system, so my guess is we shall start the day with an almighty bug hunt!

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[What nice chaps they sound like, quite as though butter wouldn't melt in their mouths, but we must record that down the admin end they can be less friendly and currently they are threatening to 'take necessary steps' to extract a further £11 from your editor for, they say, not having given them sufficient notice on stopping his banker's order. Since he went off Cnet so long ago he can't remember anything about it, but he knows the whole thing was a dead loss that cost over £50 for no useful retum whatsoever, he is reluctant to meet their demands. More in our next issue, possibly to be edited from the Fleet prison.]

## SUPERSOFT FOR PET....

We have a large quantity of PET equipment, including such unusual items as the SuperPET 9000, 9060 and 9090 disk drives, and the 700. Of course we also have more common machines such as the 4032,8032, 8096, 4040, 8050 and 8250.

Most items are reconditioned (we give a 3-month guarantee), but we do have a few new machines, in particular some recently acquired 8296 computers.

## SUPERSOFT FOR 128....

You've probably seen our *Zoom* monitor for the 64 - now we have a version for the 128. *Zoom* allows you to set up any memory configuration, unlike the built-in monitor, and has lots of other additional facilities. Price £12.95 on tape, £14.95 on disk.

*128 Plus* speeds up disk loading when you are using your 128 in 64 mode. It also allows you to use the numeric keypad and other extra keys, and speeds up most programs by over 30%! Easy to fit (but tedious on a 128D), 128 PLUS costs £19.95.

*Blitz 128* is a new BASIC compiler for the 128 with one or more disk drives. Available now, price just £29.95!

## SUPERSOFT FOR AMIGA....

You can buy an Amiga either in person, or by post, and while stocks last we have special offers on expansions and disk drives.

Add-ons in stock include *Digiview* (£175), *Deluxe Paint/Video/Print* (all 3 packages for just £199), *Midi for Amiga* (£43.43), *Textcraft* (£25), *Graphicraft* (£25), plus whatever we bring back from Las Vegas! Prices for Amiga products exclude VAT.

We also have products for the Plus 4 and C16 machines.

**SUPERSOFT**

**Winchester House, Canning Road, Harrow HA3 7SJ**

**Phone 01-861 1166**


## NETWORK NEWS

by Brian Grainger (Prestel mailbox 438727925, Compunet Courier BRIAN)

Following my last article, in which I said I was combining Compunet and Prestel news under one banner, it was suggested that Tim Amot, ICPUG's Compunet Editor, should write a separate piece on Compunet. I happily agreed. I have been fronting the ICPUG comms effort for a few years now and I believe my job of getting us started is over. Consequently I shall not be continuing as Comms Co-ordinator after the AGM. This series will not cease, the Editor permitting. I shall still be just as obnoxious and critical of Compunet, when necessary, as I have always been! This time I am going to concentrate on Prestel in general.

All sorts of things are happening to Prestel at the moment. At the end of last year the ability to access Telecom Gold from Prestel was promised. In addition, keyword search was promised for March 16th.

BT have been very busy of late on two fronts. Firstly, two services, EPAD and VPAD, have been under review. These services allow connection to the PSS system at local call rate for videotex terminals (VPAD) and applications requiring error-protection of data (EPAD). In addition, upgrades to Prestel had been planned, due to have been implemented first in Scotland in January, that would have given access to the PSS system electronic mail services. Both these services have been having problems. BT has not been taking any new customers for EPAD or VPAD and have still to decide if to extend or discontinue the service. In the mean time, a technical hitch has caused an unspecified delay to the Prestel enhancement, which will obviously have some overlap with the VPAD service. According to some reports, the hitch is lack of enough high-speed data lines for the fast data transmission required and may well take months to sort out. That is a shame, because a link-up between Prestel and PSS is a logical extension to networking. At the moment, it would seem none of you have an interest in such things as Telecom Gold. Nobody answered my request of last time to indicate if you had an account. I am sure a link through Prestel would change this.

Keyword search seemed to have hiccups as well. It took until March 17th before it was available on Enterprise. However this facility is a BIG improvement to Prestel. No longer do we have to remember meaningless page numbers like 8102132 for ICPUG. Simply *ICPUG# and you are there. I tried to guess a few areas on Prestel and most of them worked. I could never remember the page number of Solely Sixty Four and

always used to go via ICPUG i.e. Key *8102132#61. Now that is cut to *SSF#. You can also mark up to five pages for instant recall but I have not worked out how to do that yet.

One new Prestel service that actually has got off the ground is Electronic Yellow Pages (EYP). Funnily enough, Prestel did not seem to be advertising this facility, although there was an article in 'Prestel Directory' No.4 1986. I found out about it through a trade paper. The idea is that the yellow pages directory is held on a computer that can be accessed by terminal software (300/300 or 1200/1200), videotex terminals (1200/75) or Prestel Gateway. Once onto the system you can access the town and classification by name or numeric code. Having done so the standard yellow pages list will appear. The advantage over the standard directory is that business can add additional notes (e.g. prices, special offers etc.) which you can access by keypad routing as with Prestel. At present the terminal access is by a Reading telephone number so most of you will be accessing EYP by Prestel Gateway to save on the phone calls. Go to Prestel page *3813# to get there. Presently the service covers the London, Guildford, Reading and Watford areas but I suspect the system will be expanded countrywide eventually. Using the standard Prestel ID will let you roam the system but if you register with EYP (telephone 0734-506259) you will be sent your personal regional ID. When you log on with this, you will be told if the service covers your region or not. I think this is a great idea and one more step towards the wired society.

Another new service to Prestel is the introduction of a world news service. It is updated by the Observer and all pages are free of charge. I quite like this service as it is a cheap way to get an alternative view of the news. It covers the lighter side of life as well, such as TV reviews.

Many moons ago I used to rave about a service called Timefame which amongst other things used to have a chatline service which used to attract the more intelligent members of the comms community. After an upset over copyright with BT, Timefame left Prestel. Well, now Timefame Epnitex PLC has been formed and as far as I can tell is targeted at certain interest groups (e.g. Epnifarm, Epnilaw, Epnicity). Charges are based on an annual sub of £300 for business, £125 for Education and domestic users, and £75 for students. The service is apparently based on standard videotex protocols and uses local call access. Unfortunately they did not communicate their phone number for enquiries!



I must say I now spend a lot of time on Prestel looking at Solely Sixty Four and Micronet. Both these services have a highly interactive 'Letters to the Editor' facility with updates at least weekly. With SSF impinging more and more onto the Amiga it is an interesting source of behind-the-scenes news in this area. The Micronet news service on microcomputing is second to none, with all the major computing shows worldwide covered as they happen. This keeps you one step ahead in knowing about the latest Commodore machines.

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## CHANGING PRINTWHEELS ON THE DPS1101

by DP Griffin

When I first obtained my DPS daisywheel printer, I also bought a selection of printwheels, to allow a range of text styles. I was a little disappointed and surprised to find that if a wheel was changed during use, the printer went into 'sulk-mode' and refused to print any further characters. The 'Pause/Clear' button had no effect: the only action possible was to disconnect the printer, switch off and on and re-connect - not really practicable in the middle of a document.

At the recent Commodore Show, during a lull in the Question & Answer session, I asked (from the panel) whether anyone knew how to change wheels without this problem. Jim Kennedy agreed that it gave problems, said it wasn't possible and blamed a firmware bug. Nigel Peters threw in a comment - 'Change the pitch'.

After some experimentation, I discovered that if the pitch is explicitly set, then the wheel can be changed. When the 'Pause/Clear' button is pressed, to clear the 'Alert' status, the printer resumes without loss of characters. If the pitch has not been set (relying on the default) then the problem will occur.

It is not even necessary to use a 'pause' command in your document or program. With care, the 'Pause/Clear' button can be used to suspend the printing, though the timing is critical if this method is used. By using this method, it is possible to change font in mid-line (say for italics), which is not possible directly from Superscript.

Thanks, Nigel, for the tip. I hope other members will find it useful.

--oOo--

Pressure of space (and/or a change of policy - the former perhaps, certainly not the latter, and probably in fact an oversight - Ed) kept the list of 23 additions out of the last Newsletter; now there are three more and if the 26 are still not listed, or if you do not have Volume 8, number 6 of the Newsletter for a list of the first 65, you will have to send a blank disk etc to Peter Crowder, whose address is inside the back cover, for a copy of the catalogue disk which has this information and more. The librarians will try to update that disk 00 with each successive issue of the Newsletter, advising latest comments as well as changes.

The comments include the award of the minus sign to a number of disks that attract little or no interest; these will be dropped unless we hear some contrary opinions. PC-File (F 3), now at version 4, is one that has eamed this reprieve thanks to representations after it was compared unfavourably with File Express (F 23 & 24); there is probably a use for both of them. And to counterbalance this swing of opinion, the much-lauded PC-Outline (W 15) has been slighted by at least two who have found little use for its trick of organising your ideas. The Commercial Demo disks (CD 1 - 12) held by David Harrow have attracted no positive comment and, as foreshadowed, will now be expunged.

Three is a small number of additions to report after the wild expansion last autumn and winter, but they seem to be the kind we want, for two come with very specific recommendations from a satisfied user. Visible Pascal (L 89) should appeal to our language buffs; Instant Recall (F 90) appears to be an unstructured database from which any string can be recovered quickly. It sounds like a commercial program called "Streaker"; CP/M (A 91) is untried - reports please.

The disk most widely praised must be Ultra Utilities (D 12) which has done valuable work for several in rescuing accidentally-erased files. But I personally found a bug in my copy recently when I tried to revive one of many data files on a disk and could not address files after the first 64: the program would accept only a single character where two or three were needed. Like many of the better programs in the Library, Ultra Utilities is 'shareware' and the author says he would appreciate $30 for registration but 'if you can't afford the 30 bucks or are just the type who feels better getting something for nothing, we understand. We would appreciate it if you could at least give out some copies of this package though. The more people that get it, the more people there are who will potentially support our company by registering.'



Any ICPUG member who would like to subscribe to shareware authors and is discouraged by the hassle of dollar remittances is invited to let me know of these aspirations and if there is enough demand I will explore what can be done. But please do not send any money to me. Although some authors suggest particular sums for particular benefits (which might not be available in this country) several state that any contribution would be gratefully received and others indicate that even registration as a user, without any payment, gives them pleasure. Our own Jim Butterfield used to put a price of 25 cents on the PET utilities he gave away so freely, but this may have been to establish his copyright against commercial publishers who are not, by and large, much liked by authors who choose to go it alone.

There is still plenty of scope for helpers to tidy up or annotate specific subject groups of disks; volunteers should write to me stating areas of expertise or interest. And any 'wish lists' for additions will be considered sympathetically. Above all, please let us know of any disappointments so that we can try to replace inadequate disks with something better.

Please remember, when ordering copies of disks, that the letters attached to disk numbers identify subject groups and, as far as the PC library is concemed, the librarian you write to is determined by the program subject, not by your name. That way each librarian has only about 30, rather than 90, disks to manage and each member can put in three times as many requests each period. Remember also that this software is intended to be copied and shared freely and if you can do some of this, say within regional groups, you will save the librarians some work. But if you do this extensively it would be interesting to hear from time to time which programs are proving most popular.

ADDITIONS IN 1987 (up to March 10th)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 66 | B | DOS Utilities 3 | |
| 67/8 | S | Expresscalc | Spreadsheet |
| 69 | A | - Unprotect | |
| 70 | A | - Security | |
| 71 | X | Lotus utilities | For 123 |
| 72/3 | X | Draftsman | Graphs from spreadsheet files |
| 74 | X | Imageprint | IBM graphics on Epson |
| 75 | P | PF Manager | Personal finance |
| 76 | D | Hard disk utilities | |
| 77 | W | - Freeword | Simple WP |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 78 | R | Hitchikers walk | Adventure |
| 79 | E - | European languages | Elementary Fr, It, Sp & German. |
| 80 | A ? | Align progm for disk | Needs scope and special disk |
| 81 | R | Games | |
| 82 | R | PC Music | Plays tunes |
| 83 | G | PC Draw | |
| 84 | D | DOS Utilities 4 | |
| 85 | D | DOS Utilities 5 | |
| 86 | W | Chi writer | Fonts |
| 87 | R | Games | |
| 88 | R | Miscellaneous | Games & utilities |
| 89 | L + | Visible Pascal | |
| 90 | F + | Instant recall | Free-form text retrieval |
| 91 | A | CP/M 2.2 emulator | |

DELETIONS: All CD (Commercial demo) disks.

Disks marked '-' for two or more consecutive publications of the list are liable, if not reprieved, to be deleted at the next update. All grading depends on feedback from members.

PDR

## TROUBLE ON THE BUS

by B Hallliwell

For months I was plagued with intermittent performance from a Welwyn Speech 64 cartridge. Sometimes it performed faultlessly, then days would elapse before it would utter again. I retumed one unit to the supplier believing it to be faulty but the replacement behaved identically. By accident I have now stumbled on the solution: switch on any printer!

My system comprises a C64, disk drive, plotter and two printers, all daisy-chained onto the serial bus. Unless I intend to print, I only have the C64 and disk drive tumed on, a condition in which I now realise the Speech 64 fails to operate (although other cartridges work normally). I am aware that the true, parallel, IEEE bus is not guaranteed to operate if more than a third of the devices on the bus are tumed off but did not realise that a similar constraint might apply to the CBM serial version. Other members with long daisy chains take note!

--oOo--



## C64/128 LIRBARY NEWS

May I start with a plea to all members who have sent software to David Vorburg over the past 2-3 months, to send copies of their programs to me, as despite several requests David has not passed on the disks he presently holds?

However, I have managed to produce two new disks for the C64 library: Disk 15 - is a collection of programs that have been uploaded onto the Compunet system, and have been selected for their use of graphics, sprites, music and programing skills.

Disk 16 - contains a slideshow program and associated hi-res graphics from the Midnite Software Gazette, c/o Jim Oldfield, together with three other programs: an adventure, a bridge program and a calendar program.

As you may have gathered, disks 15 and 16 mainly hold good graphics programs which do show the C64's graphics capabilities very nicely, but I would like to see a slight departure from such programs in the C64 library, with more concentration on programs and utilities of use to the more serious user. When submitting programs for inclusion in the library, please make sure they work and also include instructions, either as hardcopy or as SEQ/PRG files on disk or tape. Send your programs to me together with postage and packing for the retum of your media.

### LIBRARY CATALOGUE

Both I and the other library copiers are receiving a great many requests for printed copies of the C64 library contents. Would members therefore note that NO printed copies of the library contents are available. Instead, members can obtain a copy of the library catalogue disk, which is available from the librarian for your name (for the full library rules refer to Vol 9. No.1 p.76).

Andrew Hartley

### C128 Library

The C128 library now has a further three disks available in addition to the list shown on page 81 in Jan/Feb 1987 newsletter. To request disks, please follow the guidelines published in that newsletter and send your requests to the librarian listed for your sumame on the back cover of this newsletter. The new disks are:

Disk C1 - Catalogue disks showing all programs in the C128 Library
Disk G3 - General programs in C128 mode.
Disk CL4 - CP/M version of COBOL.

TH-S

## LIBRARY PROPOSAL

At a recent national committee meeting, it was suggested that members views be canvassed about the setting up of a national ICPUG (book) library. Members wishing to borrow books would be expected to put down a retumable deposit and supply retum postage.

What are your views? Do you want a book library? If so, how often would you use it? What types of books would you require?

Please write with your comments to Tony Harrison-Smith, 150 Moreland Avenue, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 4JW. If there is sufficient support, we will arrange the formation of a library, it is up to YOU.

TH-S

## SUPERSCRIPT UPGRADE 'HEALTH' WARNING

by Stan Barker

However obvious it may be, I will point out that more powerful programs demand more memory to accommodate this power. If anyone out there with a C64 has EasyScript and intends to upgrade to SuperScript, Be Wamed! - unless you have a back-up copy of the master disk, do check the size of the files you wish to continue to use, before you send your old disk away. If you have a backup of the program disk then you have no need to read on. Those as green as me should take the precaution, before parting with the master disk, of checking the size of their files. Some of my files on EasyScript ran to 740 lines, on 40-col screen. When I tried to load these using Superscript I got the error message OUT OF MEMORY.

I was later able to use a back-up disk of EasyScript to reduce the files by half, but even so some of them were still too long to allow the use of the spelling checker (Oh boy! did I need that). I now restrict my text length in all files to 300 lines on a 40-col screen. With the excellent SS file-linking facility, I have no difficulty in producing my requirements, now I am over the long-file hurdle. How I managed without Superscript for so long I do not know.

--oOo--

Note: Any members in the Wakefield District who are interested in forming a User Group should Telephone Stan on Wakefield (0924) 275277.



## DISCOUNT CORNER

Please refer to pages 82/85 in the January/February issue for general information and other discounted items.

CBM hardware is being extended to include two new Amiga models the B500 and the A2000. The A2000 should be available through dealers in about 4 weeks from now - 8th March - and the B500 by June. At the time of writing, full details are not available but by the time you read this article they will have been published in the Computer press.

Ariolasoft Limited, 68 Longacre, Covent Garden, London, WC2, offer 30% on entertainment software and 35% on productivity software to members. You may order directly from them, telephone number 01-836 3411, your contact is John Evans.

CP/M manual, assembler disk and utilities disk are once more available from CBM (UK) Ltd, of Commodore House, The Switchback, Gardner Rd, Maidenhead SLA 7XA. However, credit card facilities are no longer available so please send a cheque or postal orders.

Database Software (advt on centre pages of this issue) offer £3 discount to members on their program Mini Office II. Net price to members £13.95 (cassette)/£16.95 (disk). Please send cheques to me, stating which type is required, with an 18p stamp for forwarding.

First Software Limited are no longer marketing software nor books for Commodore products.

Handic Software Limited are no longer marketing either software or hardware for the Commodore range of products.

JCL Software Limited have reduced their prices and are therefore no longer able to allow members discounts (previously 15%).

Microwriter Limited of Unit 2, Wandle Way, Willow Lane, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 4NA, have advised us that they will supply members with their product (the Microwriter) at the special offer price of £199.00 plus VAT. The RRP is £299.00 plus VAT. Please contact them direct quoting your current membership number, their telephone number is 01-640 8811 and your contact there is Jeremy Howard.

Software Specialists are offering members special prices on over5000 items of software for the VIC20, C64 & C16. Please contact them for their prices on Compunet - Handle DC20.

Timeware Limited have given up the distribution of Timeware products (Wordwriter 128, Data Manager 128, SwiftCalc 128, Sideways and Partner 128). No discounts are available to members any longer from them.

3D Digital Design and Development Limited, of 18/19 Warren Street, London W1P 5DB, who produce scientific and industrial interface systems, allow current members 10% discount from the RRP of their products. Please contact them directly quoting your current membership number ('phone 01-640 8811).

COMPUNET discount pages: GOTO 197324. CLUBSPOT discount pages 810213204

--oOo--

JB

## READERS WRITE . . .

BASICODE STILL LIVES . . .

J Bentley, one of the current resurrectors of the 1520 group, of 38 Conway Rd, Taplow, Maidenhead, writes:

I was pleased to learn, from those who wrote after my letter was published in the Newsletter a year ago (Jan/Feb 1986), that there are still some out there interested in Basicode. You may like to know that Radio Netherlands still broadcasts Basicode 2 programs regularly on Sundays from 9.40-9.55pm on 1008 kHz (mw). Though reception condition vary, they can usually be recorded in usable form, i.e. with very few errors, where I am and, presumably, by anyone else south or east of Watford.

There is also now a Basicode 3 version with sound, graphics and file handling, making a very good BASIC extension in its own right. This is sold commercially in Dutch bookshops with starter packs of tape, instruction book, and demo programs. Basicode 3 transmissions also come over Radio Netherlands, but at 4.40-4.45pm, on the same frequency as above. This version is very good, with most of the subroutines in machine code and hence quick; the graphics are superb. Does anyone remember sending suggestions to the BBC at the end of their series as to how Basicode could be improved? Well, someone acted on them, though it wasn't the BBC.

As a last point, yes, the programs are in Dutch, but most of those of interest - graphics, mathematical, scientific, are easily understood and translated.

1571 ALARM

A new member, Andrew Porter, of 5 Ainsdale Close, Penketh, Warrington WA5 2DN, was, not surprisingly, alarmed by the insert in the Jan/Feb issue about the 1571 bug.

I read with great interest my first copy of the ICPUG magazine but what caused the greatest alarm was the article on the 1571 disk drive and the problem of overwriting existing files, as I am consdering upgrading my 64/1541 system to a 128D. Does this problem also occur on the 128D and is there any cure? If not, it seems a waste of money to buy what is in effect a single-sided drive. Can you please put my mind at rest about the problem?

• Unfortunately the bug affects all 1570/71 drives but it does seem, however, that Commodore must sooner or later fix it - see 'Jim's Jottings' (p125) and 'News from CBM USA' on p110.



80 COLUMNS ON TV

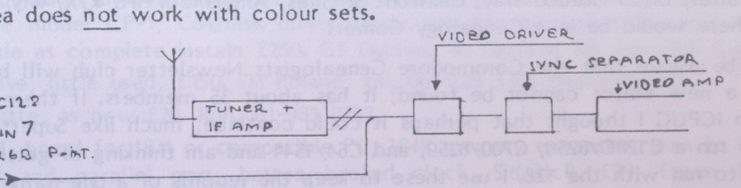
Ron Jeffs, 3 North Str, Wiveliscombe, Somerset has some news for the intrepid in search of finer resolution:

Reading Bill Clewlow's article on how to get an 80-column display on a TV in the last issue (p32) stirred distant memories of the time I modified my ZX81 and cross-connected it directly to a B&W TV, bypassing both computer UHF modulator and TV tuner/demodulator, with quite staggeringly good results as regards resolution. The reason is, of course, that normally the 'pure' output from the computer video driver is first modulated, and then demodulated in the TV, with consequent degradation of quality. In fact all this is quite unnecessary.

It all comes down to signal bandwidths of the various parts of the system, and the fact of the matter is that both the computer modulator and the TV demodulator are built for a bandwidth of around 6MHz, which is not really enough for 640-pixel resolution. The bandwidth available in the TV from the video driver stage onwards is considerably greater and quite adequate to resolve an 80-column display.

The temptation was too much to resist, so I dug out my old B&W TV and hooked up the monochrome output from the C128. To my surprise the display was excellent: the TV was quite able to resolve 'pixel on - pixel off' across the 80-column screen. It was galling to see that the sharpness was just as good as that obtained from an expensive his-res colour monitor.

I attach a schematic diagram of how to hook things up, but with a word of warning: Be careful and only use transistorized B&W TVs. Finding the right point to inject the signal can be tricky, so if you're not familiar with TV theory, get an expert to help. NB. The idea does not work with colour sets.




• We felt rather hesitant about publishing anything suggesting members connect their computers to the innards of any kind of TV, and we strongly advise against anyone trying this without expert help. ICPUG explicitly will not be responsible for damage to computer or person resulting from attempts to use this method of display.

ACCOLADE

Tony Wright, 3 Algarth Rise, Stockton Lane, York YO3 0HD is ecstatic about a software supplier:

In this day an age it is refreshing to be able to award an accolade to a software house instead of complaining about one. Quite recently I bought the Neos Mouse and CHEESE program on disk from a distributor at an attractive price but when I received the package the instructions for loading and loading/saving pictures were for tape. So I wrote to Wigmore House, who first introduced the Neos Mouse and CHEESE. It turned out that the disk I had received was not theirs, but not only did they answer all my questions about the software but they sent me a complimentary copy of the original CHEESE disk with an explanatory leaflet about disk loading. I think you will agree this is service beyond the call of duty, putting to shame many larger software houses to whom 'customer' seems to be a dirty word. At the same time Wigmore House offered me their Artist 64 on sale or return, which I thought extremely nice of them. If I do buy, I may be able to review it for the Newsletter if no one else has done so.

On a different subject, I read with interest the insert about the 1571 drive with the last issue. I do not have a 1571 myself but I very much question the atttitude of the Trading Standards Office mentioned in the insert. I have had dealings with my local office and I understand that while local matters must be dealt with locally, enquiries relating to firms trading nationally or intemationally can be pursued through any of the Trading Standards Offices. I asked my contact here and, off the record, he felt there was certainly a case to answer over the 1571. I hope the matter is vigorously pursued, if only to curb the seeming arrogance of the present Commodore management in this country.

MORE ON VIZASTAR

Henry Bamet writes from White Lodge, 96 Gordon Ave, Stanmore HA7 3QS to applaud our Vizastar review:

Your review of Vizastar was excellent. I have used this program for some time and I have only two comments to make. Firstly the Database is extremely versatile and a lot easier to master than Superbase. With the 'exec' function it becomes an easy job to access the database and pull data from it, manipulate it, and print it. I use the program for a rental management system.

You could also have mentioned how useful the automatic widening of a column can be, if you want to use it as a 'letter writer' with the facility to fill in data from the database. By the way, this letter was typed in on the spreadsheet, all in column 1.

GENEALOGY CORNER??

Stephen Farrer, of 23 Gordon Way, Chalfont St Giles, Amersham HP8 4QX, wonders what interest there would be in a Genealogy Comer?

You may be aware that the Commodore Genealogists Newsletter club will be closing down as a new editor cannot be found; it has about 35 members. If there was any interest in ICPUG I thought that perhaps it could continue, much like Super* Comer.

I myself run a C128D/8250, C700/8250, and C64/1541 and am thinking of getting a 9090 hard disk to run with the 128. I use these to keep the records of a one-name study, in which so far I have amassed about 10,000 birth records covering 1837-1984; going back before 1837 will give me another 8000 records. To each record I add marriage, children, death, and wills, which entails a four-file record. I have written simple programs as best I can to access my information, using Superbase and Superscript.

• This letter was directed to the Editor to ask if we wanted a Genealogy Comer, but this is a question we do not feel we can answer without any idea of what interest there is among members. Would those interested get in touch with either Stephen or us?

--oOo--

## Late For Sale Ad

PET 4032 good working order. £90 o.n.o. Boyan Love, tel. 04320 76020 (Hereford)



# FOR SALE & WANTED

AMIGA 1000, hi-res monitor, 256k memory expansion, extemal 3.5" drive, mouse, Canon PJ1080A colour ink jet printer, Konix joystick, Aidma monitor stand, books worth £100, two PerfectData disk storage units, computer desk and chair; all worth over £2200, £1500 o.n.o. Ken Tumer, tel. 0229 22120/22342 (daytime, Barrow-in-Furness)

CBM 715 (256k)/8250 drive/1361 (136col/150cps hvy dty) printer; all cables; manuals; S/script II. Little used and perfect. £900 o.n.o. Lionel Tun, tel. 01-928 3065

CBM 128D (as new) £360; MPS 801 printer (as new) £65; Star Gemini 10 x printer £120; CBM 1702 monitor £125; CBM VIC 1011A (RS232C i/face) £25; Trident CBM RS232C card £20; Ram Electronics Sprint 128 (centronics i/face) £35; 1571 drive (new) £200; 1541 drive (new) £140. 64 software on disk: Easystock £15; Superbase £20; Practicalc II £25; Practicalc 64 £10; Logo £ 5; Pilot £5; Entrepreneur £15; High Flyer £4. Also Company Pac 123 for the +4 (on disk) £20. Books: Comal Handbk £7.50; Structured Programming with Comal £5. P Haughey, tel. 0742 489289/0909 732770 (evenings) (Worksop)

C128 in good order with one CPM disk and data recorder, £170 o.n.o.; also Super Box IEEE interface, offers? G Baillon, tel. 06333 73048 (Gwent)

C128 with box £200; 1541 drive £100; MPS802 printer £200; various cartidges £5.50 each; variety CBM books - offers? D Stansbie, tel. 021-444 1358 (evenings - B'ham)

3032 PET (32k)/3040 dual drive/3022 printer; acoustic modem (Prism/Y2); Visible Music Monitor board/speaker; Arrowchip Toolkit and Keychip; cassette unit (Tensai); software including w/processor. £500 o.n.o. Allan Potton, tel. 0376 516335 (Essex)

Complete computer installation for RTTY/Morse/Amtor/ASCII, comprising AEI computer-patch i/face model CP-1; C64/disk drive/printer/cassette/manuals/software; all fully operatnl, sale as complete instaln £250. GS Dutton, 40 Grafton Rd, Harwich CO12 3BD

1570 disk drive, little used, £150. FM Poland, tel. 061-223 3306 (Manchester)

C2N Datassette, as new £20. Ron, 01-981 0262

AST 6 PACK, board for IBM or compatible PC, 384K memory expansion (can be used as less), serial and parallel port, battery-backed clock, Sidekick, £99; Epson intemal IEEE interface for MX/FX printers, £20; SuperGraphics chip/manual for 8032 - allows turtle/other graphics on 8032, £15. David Harrow, tel. 0622 813001 (Maidstone)

SHINWA CP80 printer with hard serial i/face for C64, EasyScript, Easyfile, £95. C64 micropack cartridge i/face for Prestel Terminal Td 1400 (or simlr) £20. Roy Berridge, tel. 0869 38400 (Banbury)

Superscript/128 £25; Superbase/128 £25 (£40 the two); Swiftcalc £20; Grafpad II (64 mode) £20. Tel. Georges Dupont 01-730 5507 (evenings)

64 software - S/base v2 £25; S/script £25; CalcResult Advanced £25; Powerplan Spreadsheet £10; VIP (sophisticated Comms) £25; Super C (Abacus £20; PAL assembler (+ Ian Sinclair dongle) £15; CBM Assembler Development System £12.50; CBM Assembler Tutor £5. Mike Rose, tel. 01-439 (daytime) 01-368 6645 (evenings/weekends)

WANTED

C64 Z-80 cartr/Z80 refce guide/CP/M disk. R Walker, 103 Sycamore Fld, Harlow, CM19 5RX

COMAL cartridge and manual, R Tuffin, tel. 0245 266332 (Essex)

8032 printer manual - buy/borrow/photocopy. B Westley (personal), tel. 01-527 6400

Disk drive or printer for C128/64, can't pay over £70. R Slaven tel. 061-202 2031

MCS801 col printer manual, ph/copy or orgnl, G Foden, 35 Woodhall Dr, Banbury OX16 9TY

## ICPUG Software Libraries

Organiser: Joe Griffin, Clovelly, Lynwick St., Rudgwick, Horsham, W. Sussex RH12 3DJ

Please remember that the Libraries are operated on an entirely voluntary basis and, unlike many of the American User Groups, ICPUG DOES NOT CHARGE A COPYING FEE.

The Libraries contain PUBLIC DOMAIN programs from a wide range of sources, including our own members and other user groups. ICPUG DOES NOT SUPPORT SOFTWARE PIRACY.

Members may obtain ALL the library material. However, in order to retain a measure of control over the work-load imposed on the Librarians, we do restrict the amount of material which may be obtained on any one request.

Disk users may obtain up to two disk copies at a time (+4 three, Amiga five).
Tape users may obtain up to four programs, from any one disk.

To obtain copies of catalogue or library disks, please send :

A statement of what you want
Your membership number.
Disks (stating FORMAT - type of drive - required) or Tape
We will NOT use a disk as a 'flippy' as it can damage the disk drive.
Pre-addressed re-usable packaging suitable for retum
There have been occasions when disks have arrived bent in half!
Please ensure that the packing is adequate.
Retum postage - SEND STAMPS.
Overseas members should send International Reply Coupons
(allow at least one and a half IRC's per disk sent).

PET - Joe Griffin (see above)

VIC - Brian Wise, 17 Knighton Close, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 6DP
8050/8250 Joe Griffin - (see above)

COMAL - Brian Grainger, 73 Minehead Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2HZ

1520 Plotter - W G C Austin, School of Geography, Faculty of Humanities,
Newcastle Polytechnic, Lipman Building, Sandyford Road,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST

1520 (Tape) : John Bentley, 38 Conway Road, Taplow, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 0LD

PC - Peter Reynolds, 65 Claremont Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1TE

Please always send your requests to the librarian listed below who deals with the CATALOGUE CATEGORY of material you want. Catalogue from Peter Crowder - (see below).

| | |
|---|---|
| A-D | David Murray, 8 Enticott Close, Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3ET |
| E-O | Peter Crowder, 27 Crawford Drive, Liverpool L15 8AE |
| P-Z | David Harrow, 28 Phoenix Drive, Wateringbury, Maidstone, Kent ME18 5DR |



Plus 4 (& C-16) - Richard Hunt 45 Cumberland Rd, Bromley, Kent BR2 0PL

C-64 - Andrew Hartley, 83 Thornton Crescent, Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 6DQ

Please send your requests to the librarian listed below who deals with the first letter of your surname.

| | |
|---|---|
| A D H | David Miller, 38 Exeter Gardens, Ilford, Essex IG1 3LB |
| B | Fred Owens, PO Box 3241, RAF Mildenhall, Suffolk. |
| C | R Burns, 48 Grasmere Road, Royton, Oldham, Lancs OL2 6SR |
| E I J K | Mike Hingston, 1 Stafford Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 9HN |
| F G | Geoff Crowther, 60 Fleckney Rd., Kibworth Beauchamp, Leics LE8 0HE |
| H | David Miller, 38 Exeter Gardens, Ilford, Essex IG1 3LB |
| L N O | Nigel Corry, 4 Horsted Way, Rochester, Kent ME1 2XY |
| M | Ray Medford, 4a South Grove, Brooklands, Sale, Cheshire M33 3AU |
| PUVXYZ | Bill Hull, Rocklea, Pilling Lane, Preenall, Blackpool, Lancs |
| Q R T | Peter Crowder - (see PC above) |
| S | Brian Wise - (see VIC above) |
| W | Chris Wright, 37 Cecil Street, Lytham-St-Annes, Lancs FY8 5NN |

Germany (including BAOR) Capt R Harrison, Ord Svcs, BFPO 45

Overseas (other) & 8050/8250 Joe Griffin - (see above)

128 - Organiser: Tony Harrison-Smith, 150 Moreland Avenue, Benfleet, Essex SS7 4JW

Please send your requests to the librarian listed below who deals with the first letter of your surname.

| | |
|---|---|
| A-C | Chris Wright - (see C-64 above) also 8050/8250 copies |
| D-J | Damien McEnroe, 11 Pentridge Cl, Eastfield Chase, Cramlington, Northumberland |
| K-R | Paul Smith, Egdon House, Nottington, Weymouth, Dorset |
| S-Z | Bill Gardner, 156 Henwood Rd, Compton, Wolverhampton WV6 8PA |

Overseas Tony Harrison-Smith - (see 128 Organiser above)

Amiga - Mike Todd, 27 Nursery Gardens, Lodgefield, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 1SF

Non-ICPUG Amiga - John Bickerstaff (address inside front cover) (up to 10 disks)